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ENTRANCE INTO THE PARSONAGE.

5 Elliot, Samuel Hayes
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THE
PARISH-SIDE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF SOME OTHER BOOKS, AND

C L E R K

OF THE PARISH OF EDGEFIELD.

With Illustrations



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P R E F A C E .

THE "Sunny-Side," and the "Shady-Side," of Life in a Parsonage, having been given to the world, and its sympathies, very justly I allow, enlisted on the Pastor's side, it seems not an undesirable attempt, nor too presuming an intention, to portray, in a few sketches, some of the excitements, labors, and trials, experienced on the PARISH-SIDE.

This has been here attempted with all reasonable brevity, and with fairness. The writer has not arrayed the Parish against the minister, but has represented the two as happily united in the strong, indissoluble tie of LOVE, fulfilling the same ends of the Gospel Church.

It had been an easy matter to produce from some other society a darker picture, than is furnished in the well-ordered Parish of Edgefield. For to whom is it

not known, that in the ruins of many a Parish, here and there, may be gathered up the certain history of an unhappy pastoral relation—at least, the proof, that pastor and people were not heartily united?

The writer finds that he has now but made a beginning. The history of the labors, trials, and sacrifices of his native Parish, from its commencement to the present time, would fill a dozen volumes of the size of this; but, at present, the reader must be satisfied with the sketches that have been prepared. If amused or saddened by them, yet let him learn the gracious care of His church and people which a covenant-keeping God manifests, through the changes and trials of an hundred years.

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CHAPTER I.

MR. WILLIAMS—THE BRIDE EXPECTED—THE PARISH EXCITEMENT— THE PARSONAGE.

OUR minister, Mr. George Williams, was to return in two weeks, with his bride. We did not know anything about her, excepting what we had learned from occasional hints or remarks of Mr. Williams, who would, of course, speak in her praise. We were all, therefore, quite anxious on this point. It would be so happy for the parish, if Mrs. Williams should prove to be the minister's wife we all desired, and so unfortunate, if not. Well! we were quite in commotion and excitement. Mr. Williams, our minister, was but twenty-six years of age, and had preached for us two years. He had been ordained, by the consociation, after preaching a few weeks, and by the society generally was beloved and respected. There were some, who, at the first, were not as cordial in their feelings towards him as we wished. But his piety and talents were so decided, and his social character was so pleasing, that at the end of two years, there were very few who stood at all aloof from him. His course had been marked by the blessing of God on his labors.

Many were received into the church; the congregation was large, and continually increasing; there being very few slips in the church that were not crowded every Sabbath; and his popularity and usefulness were undeniable.

Now he was absent, to secure and bring home his bride. We all rejoiced at this circumstance, for it had been six years since we had a minister's wife among us, with whom all were pleased. We amused ourselves, both the old and the young, especially the latter, in guessing how she would look; whether she was as tall as Miss Angelina, the daughter of Deacon Hartwell, or as short and round as Henrietta Peters, or as comely and graceful as Anna Evans. We thought how she would blush, when she first came into church, and everybody gazed at her. What a memory she would needs possess, to recollect the names of all the gentlemen and ladies in the parish, to whom she would be introduced. Then we fancied how delighted she would be to arrange all her furniture, and boxes, and papers in the sweet old Parsonage, so lately all brushed up! We made many and many a plan to go and see our minister and his bride, and thought how many interesting and excellent stories she would tell the little children, when they were allowed to visit her. She must be everything sweet, and amiable, and talented, and good. "Oh! if she should be *ugly*! No, no, *no*! she can't be. Our minister cannot have anybody that's ugly for *his* wife."

The Parish was all expectation. It was a pleasant idea that we were to greet again among us the wife of our minis-

ter: quite an affair of importance. The ladies made arrangements to furnish the pantry with every choice delicacy they could think of, and had they known what would have been agreeable to the new occupant, they would cheerfully have arranged the whole house, that the labor of doing it might have been spared her. They, however, contented themselves with washing and dusting it very thoroughly, and airing it every day. The young ladies, assisted by some of the young gentlemen, brushed over the newly springing grass in the front yard, and trimmed up the rose bushes, lilacs, and other shrubbery. As there were a few acres of good land attached to the Parsonage, the fences were put in repair, and Deacon Hartwell came with his stout horse and ploughed the garden. Mr. Williams had agreed with Mr. Simonds to plant the potatoe and corn grounds "at halves," and this was left for him to see to.

The Parish of Edgefield is an old and respectable one. It is situated near the Connecticut river, and is beautiful in meadow, upland, and valley scenery. The farms are good, the village thriving and populous, the inhabitants, for the most part, orderly, temperate, industrious, and religious. They are, at least, in the habit of attending to the means of grace on the Sabbath, and it is a pleasing sight to witness the crowds that regularly go up to the sanctuary to worship God on the Lord's day.

In a central part of the village, but a short distance from the church, is the Parsonage. It is a two-storied house, with two large maple trees in front of it, and a gravelled

walk from the front door down a curved line to the white picket gate. Along this there grow some beautiful heads of box, and between these are rose and wax-berry bushes; and Persian lilacs grow in the corners of the yard. The posts of the fence in front of the parsonage are very tall, and graced with rounded balls, and a large gate opens into a drive-way to the back yard and barn. Some large cherry, pear and apple-trees grow on the south side, and on the east and north sides of the parsonage, and the orchard is full of beautiful trees, that produce much delicious fruit. A little stream of water winds its way along on the back side of the house, and it is just rapid enough to carry little water-wheels, and to permit of dams and waterfalls.

The carpenters and painters, white-washers and scrubbers had been hard at work on the house to have it ready—for the new bride. The windows were dazzling clear, the paint and mortar being carefully and thoroughly removed from them, the window blinds were newly painted, and the whole house shone like a new thing in its beautiful retreat. How would the beloved minister and his bride admire it all! And there was some impatience for their arrival. The Parish had raised over two hundred dollars to repair the Parsonage, and everybody was gratified to see how great a change had been wrought in a few weeks. A good many went to visit it, and wander over it while they might, without causing any vexation to its occupants. Almost every one said, "what a sweet parlor," "what a delightful little bed room," "what a snug pantry." So they were pleased, and all in expectation.

CHAPTER II.

THE SUDDEN STORM—THE PARSONAGE FEELS IT—SCRUBBING—THE ARRIVAL.

THE morning previous to the arrival was one of the loveliest of spring. The sun shone without a cloud, the little birds came out and sung most cheerfully, the air was truly mild. Everybody said, "what a beautiful spring opening is this." At noon a change was observed in the air; the wind came in little gusts from the south-east, and envious clouds shot rapidly over the face of the bright sky. Before night the wind became very fresh and the clouds very black, and it was evident to all that one of those violent south-east storms which are frequent on the coast and along the river towns, was just ready to fall upon us. Before nine o'clock, the storm broke in great fury; wind, rain, lightning and thunder disturbed the night. Few remembered a more violent storm. More than one chimney in the place was blown off; one barn was blown over; several trees were torn up by the roots, and there was a great trembling throughout the Parish.

"Oh! what a terrible time for the minister and his bride, *his new bride*, to return," said Mrs. Hartwell.

"Yes, it's a hard storm," said the Deacon. "I am afraid the Parsonage will suffer from it. These south-east gales always hit the house fair. I think we shall find matters in a poor plight there, in the morning."

"Why you distress me at the very thought of it," said she. "Is it not most unfortunate, especially when everything is in such complete order for their reception?"

"Well, storms come as they are sent," he replied; "we shall see in the morning."

The morning came, and the storm seemed about over. But how dismal was the sight abroad. How many trees were torn up, or broken, old fences scattered over the fields, hedges spoiled, and barns and dwellings injured.

Alas! the Parsonage. The wind had driven in a window of the pantry, and pies, cakes, and sweetmeats, were drenched and drowning in rain pools. The back-door had blown open, and the rain had rushed in, leaves and mud had followed through the hall into the kitchen. The large apple-tree that sheltered the kitchen window from the morning sun, was blown down on to the house, and had smashed in and ruined the window. The kitchen, floor, walls, and furniture, were in an awful plight. The cellar had a foot of water in it. The garret floor was drenched with water that came in from the side of the scuttle and chimney. In front of the house, the shrubbery was much of it prostrated, the leaves and sticks had been blown all back into the beautiful front yard, a large limb from one of the tall maples hung down on the front gate, having been broken off by the

violence of the wind, and the poor fence that was on the east side of the garden, was nearly all blown down. The large doors of the barn were thrown from their hinges, and one of them almost ruined. The wood in the shed was all drenched with rain. Awful was the contrast with yesterday! Disheartening indeed! And everybody had so much to do with his own house, it seemed impossible at once to put in order the Parsonage.

But as Mr. Williams would certainly arrive that very day, the people left their own houses, and gathered together to put the Parsonage in some order again.

There were assembled, hard at work, by nine o'clock in the morning, at which time the sun came out, Deacon Hartwell, and Mrs. Hartwell, and Jonas, and Angelina; Mr. and Mrs. Street, and Evelina; Mr. and Mrs. Sweetser, and Henry; Mrs. Herrick, Mrs. Burgess, and her two daughters; Esquire Peters and his wife, and two of their daughters; Dr. Alexander came, and his widowed daughter, Mrs. Hillhouse. And there were a great many besides these. And they brushed, and shoveled, and mopped. They cut down the broken limb of the maple. They sawed off and removed as carefully as possible the fallen apple-tree. They obtained a new window-frame, and puttied in the glass. And all worked, and some joked, and all perspired. Old dresses draggled on the wet floors; hands unused to much toil, grasped hold of any object that was to be removed, and made familiar acquaintance with soot, and glass, and chips. Men lifted hard to remove the trunks and limbs

of the fallen trees, and all this time every one was hoping that the minister would not come. But the day was fixed. Mr. Williams and his bride were wishing to find themselves safe in their new home. As soon as possible, under the circumstances of the storm, Mr. Williams left the hotel where he had passed the night, several miles away from Edgefield, and as fast as the state of the roads would allow, hurried towards home.

In the midst of all this excitement, hard work, and dreadful disappointment—hark! the sound of a carriage rattling over the bridge in the direction from which Mr. Williams will arrive—another moment, and a carriage gains the top of the hill at the lower end of the village. A lad runs over to the Parsonage, out of breath, and cries out, “They’re come! they’re come!” What a shriek of consternation followed! How the ladies looked! How the gentlemen stormed! How the whole parsonage appeared! “*How could they come?*” “How can we see them?” Such were the exclamations. The ladies seized their aprons, and wiped away the perspiration from their eyes and cheeks. Some ran to the looking-glasses. Some scolded and fretted. Others wore a mock calmness. Some courtesied and said, “How do you do, my *dear* Miss Hartwell, most happy to see you,” and so forth, and so forth. They ought immediately to have sent some one to meet the carriage, and escort the travellers to the Deacon’s. But no one thought of this until it was too late. The carriage was at the door. And Mr. and Mrs. Williams were out, and working their way over

the ruins towards the front entrance, before anybody thought of stopping them.

Shaking hands with this one and that one, they were in. "Oh, dear!" shouted the minister, as he stood in the centre of the parlor, the doors of the house all open, and the cleansing but half through, and all the disaster at once revealed,—“What in the wide world has come to pass, speak?”

There was nothing to be said. The ladies covered their faces, the gentlemen gathered in. The minister looked at his wife. This was an introduction into parsonage-life without a precedent. Here was the quiet, peaceful, smiling home he had pictured to his youthful bride. Mr. Williams rather stole a glance at her than fairly looked her in the face. But that reassured him. Such a mirthful, facetious expression ran over her countenance, that he, unable to repress it, burst into a loud, spasmodic laugh, and as it was as well to laugh as cry, and the laugh was catching, it was followed by all the gentlemen, ladies, boys, and girls, who had crowded together into the house. And so Mr. Williams introduced his young wife to her new home, and to a great circle of his best friends. They shook hands and laughed, and apologized, and “dismalized,” and “awfulized,” and “Oh deared,” till thoroughly acquainted, and then all recollected that Mr. Williams must go immediately to Deacon Hartwell’s till things were put right at the Parsonage.

CHAPTER III.

THE PASTOR.

WE had scarcely thought of examining the features or carriage of our minister's wife, or of criticising her ways and peculiarities, if, indeed, she exhibited any peculiarities, so overwhelmed were we with our own sad plight, and so deeply were we distressed, humbled, and mortified. But we remembered after all was over, and things had been arranged, that she appeared exceedingly kind, and that she was agreeable and intelligent looking—perhaps rather graceful and pretty. We came, in due time, to appreciate her very highly. It was three or four days before they were quietly domesticated at the Parsonage. In about two weeks they had everything comfortably and permanently settled, and the people began to pay them frequent calls. Mr. Williams received them with great politeness, and seemed to be happy in witnessing the favorable impression that attended his wife's introduction to the Parish. He immediately recommenced his pastoral visits among us, and one of his first cares was to call on the sick. Two or three persons had died in his absence, and he visited the families that had been

afflicted, tendering them his kindest sympathies, and consoling them by the presentation of the most appropriate truths of the gospel. It was a pleasure to see him thus engaged in the work of his Master, who himself when on the earth went about doing good ; and to enjoy his presence among us as an ambassador of God. He labored as one "caring for the sheep," "taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

His people, however, took care to see him provided with a comfortable support. They paid him a salary of five hundred and fifty dollars a year, and he had the Parsonage, also, valued at one hundred and twenty-five dollars a year. He was a little in debt for his education when he came among us ; but by economy in his expenses, and a frugal way of living, he reduced the sum very soon, and by-and-bye it was all paid. The people vied with each other in showing him little acts of kindness, and in presenting him with delicacies and substantials for his table. When the winter arrived, they drew him twelve or fifteen loads of wood. He also received hay and straw for his horse and cow. Rarely did Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's arrive, without his table being loaded with a fat turkey or two, or a goose, or a large fine roast, or ham. Occasionally the young men collected money, and purchased him books for his library ; and a large idolized arm-chair, rather too easy for hard work in the study, once found its way into it during his absence. The ladies made Mrs. Williams

many a delicate present, that she highly appreciated. A very easy and rich sofa was also given to them, and a splendid rocker. One old gentleman, who loved to do things by himself, bought Mr. Williams a large and finely-moulded map of the United States, which he hung in the hall. One little boy brought over a pair of beautiful young doves to Mrs. Williams, and received a most hearty kiss from her in return.

"And now where shall we put them?" inquired she.

"Oh! I'll tell you," said he. "There are some dove holes in the south end of the old cow-house, where it is warm; and Charlie Brigham is coming up this afternoon with a saw and hammer, to make a box inside. That will be nice, wont it?"

"Very, indeed!" she replied. "My beautiful little doves, what a warm sunny house you will then have."

Mr. Williams was not an idle man. He arose early and often wrote in his study an hour before breakfast, and employed as much of the forenoon in this exercise as possible. He visited the people frequently in the afternoon. His evenings were for the most part spent in his own family. He preached two written sermons every Sabbath, unless ill, or relieved by the assistance of some brother minister, who was present. Occasionally he preached a third sermon, but this was not his rule. Yet he seldom failed to attend the third exercise, and to make some remarks. He had also his regular Wednesday evening lecture, and a bible class on Friday evenings. The prayer meetings, other than

these, he seldom attended. A large number of funerals occurred every year in the Parish requiring his time and effort. He visited the Sabbath School frequently, and spoke to the children. A great many days every year he passed in visiting the District Schools of the town, and he often spent hours of his time in the examination of teachers for the schools. He belonged to an association of ministers, and to a ministers' monthly meeting. The church was a consociated one, consequently he was often abroad on business appropriate to such connections. His time was thus all occupied. Few men have had more to do, or more responsible trusts to secure. The minister of Christ is, moreover, set *to watch for souls*, as one who must give account. Mr. Williams regarded this as his highest responsibility, and it rested much upon his mind. He would often exclaim, "Lord! who is sufficient for these things?"

He was an earnest, solemn, faithful preacher. And he was successful in his master's work. At one time previous to his marriage, over sixty persons united with the church, who were believed to be truly converted to God. Not unfrequently, two or three persons, not in a time of general awakening on the subject of religion, would be propounded for admission to the church, and often some one who was distressed, on account of his sins, would call to converse with him at his study.

As I have reflected on the kind of life our minister led, and have been an eye witness to it, I have been ready to doubt whether he could long endure such a constant demand

on him for his time and exertions. Then I have admired the grace of God in the adaptation of some men's minds to labors of this very nature ; and have seen that it was " of grace " that no one might boast. I have never failed at such seasons to see the value of these labors to a given community ! Who but a servant of Christ, a devoted, self-sacrificing minister of the Gospel will, or can, perform the duties that devolve constantly on the PASTOR OF A PARISH ! I hold him, therefore, very high in my private esteem. I know not how he could be spared if it is important to secure attention to those society matters that in all Christian communities have, from the earliest times, been highly valued. And then how simple is the whole arrangement by which he is secured to us, and the objects of his care regarded. A small salary, that is raised with very little inconvenience to any one person, supports him. Kind attention and confidence cheer him, and the blessing of God on the word spoken, gives him life. Who would not be of those that by their united action secure to a people one who goes out and in among them, breaking unto them the Bread of Life ! Many fear that he will early finish his work on earth, but I trust that he may long be spared to us, the faithful shepherd of the fold of Christ.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARISH AS IT WAS—PASTORLESS.

OUR society and parish had passed through something of a "fiery trial" previous to Mr. Williams's settlement. I do not like to publish it, but perhaps it is desirable, that it may be the better understood why we were made so very happy by having a good and faithful minister with us, and a most intelligent and agreeable lady for his wife. As I have already said, it had been six years since one of this description had been with us. Indeed, we were four years without a settled minister, until Mr. Williams came. During this period the Parish had "heard" a large number of candidates, and for a year employed Rev. Mr. Rice as a "stated supply." Mrs. Rice accompanied her husband, but resided among us very little of that period. She "didn't like the country. Her husband was accustomed to a city congregation, and herself to a city life." "The manners of the country people," she said, "displeased her, and if she remained too long at any one time among them, she was sure to grow stiff and awkward herself." She was a very dignified lady, and fine looking, and she always dressed in good taste, extremely in fash-

ion, and at times appeared affable. But she took no decided interest in the affairs of the society, and urged her husband to leave it as soon as his engagement expired. Mr. Rice was a mild inoffensive sort of a man, who would have taken an interest in the Parish if his family had allowed it. When he was alone he seemed to enjoy his position among us, and he even said, to some of his friends, that could he have his own way about it, he should love to pass the evening of life among just such a people, and in the quietude of the country Parish. But with the expiration of the year he left. He died two years ago in the city of New York, quite disheartened and broken down. His wife, who is wealthy, resides there still.

The last minister we had settled among us was always uneasy. He had been married thrice. His last wife was a woman of considerable education and refinement, with a tolerable share of piety. But she was always looking on the dark side of things, and rambling off into regions of poetry and fancy, to the serious loss of her influence, and the detriment of her usefulness, patience and contentment. She became finally so disgusted, or wearied out with the duties of her station, that she incessantly urged her husband to leave. She was quite a writer. Some of the magazines and papers published her articles. To complete these she sat up frequently half the night, and slept away the whole of the next morning, prayers and all. Being paid for these efforts, she magnified her office in the eye of her husband, and induced him to think that in another sphere, where

literary privileges were more abundant than here, she might be able, by her pen, to half support the family. Mr. Smith felt accordingly very uneasy. They both grew more and more dissatisfied. They neglected to call as usual, on the people, or to interest themselves in the Sabbath School, the prayer meetings, or the weekly associations. Mr. Smith said that he must have more salary if he should think of remaining. But he complained of the coldness of the people, the endless strifes among certain families in the Parish, of the dulness of the society, the want of high schools to educate his children, of the severity of his labors, and general failure of physical health to discharge the duties of the place. We went time and again to him, offered him more salary, gave him presents, deplored the coldness of the church and the variance of the families he had mentioned. We offered to release him from the duties of the pulpit for three or six months, or longer if he desired it, that he might recruit his strength, and promised to relieve him of many of his burdens. Thus we discussed the matter for one or two years. At length he asked a dismissal. The church, in the meanwhile, had lost their first attachment to him. He no longer manifested a whole-hearted interest in them, but was complaining, uneasy, and frequently absent. We ascertained that he had preached as a "candidate" for settlement in several churches, here and there, in the meantime sending to us over the Sabbath some "Licentiate" from the Seminary, or a minister not otherwise employed. True, he did not seem to suit any of them, for he received no call.

But this course of things, continued some time and perseveringly, weaned many of his old friends from him, and after much personal bickering on all sides, we parted. The wounds of those days are not yet healed, but time has softened them. They went elsewhere, but we have never heard much about his ministerial labors or successes since.

After Mr. Smith left, we engaged a young man from the Seminary, to supply the pulpit. He preached three Sabbaths, and then his scholastic sermons being ended, he accepted of another similar invitation in another vacant church, and we received in his place an aged minister residing in the neighborhood. His sermons were excellent, but the paper on which they were written was discolored by age, torn and ruffled by long and hard usage. The young people smiled as he drew them forth from his pocket, and they slept over his antiquated periods. But he was a good man, and has since, I suppose, gone to his great reward.

One person supplied our pulpit for three months, who, at the same time, (as we at length ascertained,) also had an engagement to supply two other pulpits. He accordingly farmed out the whole to his other licentiates on advantageous terms to himself, preaching an occasional sermon in each place to satisfy the people, and considered it a very good business transaction. We had in four years more than sixty different preachers. And perhaps there were two hundred different applications for the pulpit. Three or four young ministers found their wives among us in this manner! Some of these preachers were remarkable for their "beauty," oth-

ers for their "grace" and "youthful appearance." Again it was said of one, "how eloquent he is!" Of others it was remarked they were "exceedingly talented!" Some were great "readers," others great "thinkers;" again, great "talkers." It was thought that we might safely calculate that this person would make a "splendid extempore speaker," another a "fine writer." Some of the people admired the speakers with loud voices, because they could hear them without making the *least* effort. To a great many the soft and pathetic style of preaching had a peculiar charm, and others were carried away by the fiery zeal of certain would-be reformers, evangelists and come-outers. We had a great many society meetings to settle this one or that. But the Parish never could come to an agreement respecting any one of the many candidates who offered themselves, till Mr. Williams came. By the good providence of God he was sent here, as it seemed, to unite us as the heart of one man, to put an end to this unceasing turmoil, and recover to us that peace which had so long been to multitudes the object of earnest prayer to God. A divided church, a pastorless church and society, is sure to go down, or to be weak for Christ and the souls of men.

I remember that during this period, there were incessant applications for the pulpit. Several of those who sent word or came here, were introduced by neighboring ministers, and some were the relations of certain individuals in the church or society. Of course all these must be heard, though it must be confessed that they usually gave but little

satisfaction to the people. Yet Deacon John Willard was deeply offended because the committee refused to engage his nephew a second Sabbath! Some of the preachers gave us trouble. They came in and boarded in the place and went about making friends in the Parish, and advertising their own merits at prayer meetings and the like, after the committee had declined to employ them further. Others sent a great many complimentary letters to particular persons, and represented themselves either as greatly injured by the committee, or deeply solicitous for the good of the Parish. There were several who came, bearing letters of introduction from one or two prominent Doctors of Divinity abroad, whose great names were secured to bolster up their own little ones. We frequently had three or four fine looking stranger ministers with us on the Sabbath, who came, and finding the pulpit engaged, held over in hopes of securing it the next time. It would seem that one or two clergymen in the country, residing, I know not how far away, knew precisely our situation, and the very minister we wanted. They accordingly recommended ten or twelve different ones of the required piety and talents! I remember that it seemed to me some ministers abroad regarded themselves as the tutelary guardians of our interests, and it was a very pleasing idea. It was very evident that we should not suffer if it lay in their power to help us. Some of the introductory letters we received were directed to "whomsoever it may concern," and so forth, being apparently as good as a legal instrument, running thus,—“Know

all men by these Presents." These papers, in some instances, had "concerned" a good many different Parishes, and still the holders presented them.

An individual who possessed a tolerable good share of ministerial ability, assured us that he had preached as a candidate in a great many pulpits, but that he had never received an united call to settle any where. He was still "prospecting." Several came in among us, and preached till we were pleased with them, when they withdrew elsewhere. Such persons usually found fault with the salary, and the location of the town. We became suspicious of all finally, and voted to make the supply of the pulpit a matter of special earnest prayer. We had fallen off in our benevolent contributions, in our attendance at church on the Sabbath, and on the church-meetings, and prayer-meetings. We saw this at last. Ruin seemed before us. A part of the Society threatened to leave, and form a Methodist Society in the west district. Thus matters stood, when in answer to earnest prayer, as we think, Mr. Williams was sent among us.

CHAPTER V.

EDGEFIELD.

THE Connecticut river is, at Edgefield, a very wide and beautiful stream, flowing gently towards the sea, without a ripple, and so tempting forth upon it, the tiny boats that are here and there moored along its gentle banks, or held afloat at their anchors. In the spring floods the waters rise above their banks, and spread far over the meadows, enriching the soil, and presenting to the eye a wide sheet of water, like a land-locked lake. And, at certain seasons of the year, a dense mist rises along the whole valley of the stream, and envelopes the immediate country on both sides of it, so that an observer on the hill towns, distant ten or twelve miles, can trace for a great way the course of the river, and yet see no object within the limits of the fog, but the dark summits of the mountains that rise above it, and seem to him as islands of a great lake or of the sea.

Just above the high-water mark, the village of Edgefield is situated. Its main street is in a north and south line, parallel with the course of the stream. This street is very wide, and on the west side of it, fronting the east, is the

church. Below the church a street comes in from the west, and passes over Main Street, and leads away down, by several beautiful windings through the meadow, to the ferry. And across the ferry is the large town of Hunting. And above this, about five miles on a highland where the church is seen, is Surry. And there a Female Seminary of world-wide reputation is situated, and hundreds of young ladies are there educated. These go forth into every part of the land as teachers and wives, and goodly daughters of science and piety. Nay, many go from this renowned institution into the most distant countries of the earth, among the barbarous people of lands unblest with the gospel institutions, to reform and Christianize them, where, alas ! many die, and return no more to the homes of their childhood.

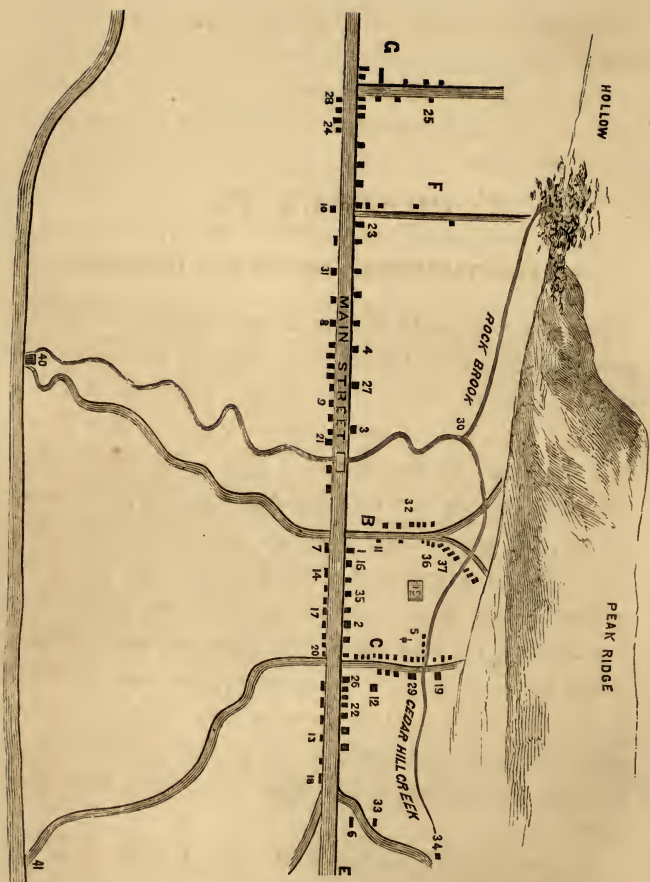
Above the church a little way, is the Academy ; and a few rods north of this is another east and west street ; and further on, a winding road from West Edgefield, that hits our main street at an obtuse angle, and upon this there is a large grist and saw mill owned by Deacon Willard. It is just at that point that Cedar Hill Creek makes its appearance from out of a wild and romantic ravine, having had a "rough-and-tumble" course of twenty miles from the mountains. This creek then wanders on behind Cemetery Hill to its junction with Rock Brook, a large stream that flows around the south point of Peak Ridge. The two, there united, flow smoothly on towards the river, crossing Main Street beneath a handsome, arched bridge, a little below the

church. Through the low meadows it pursues a meandering course to the main stream.

On the south side of the stream, on the right after crossing the bridge, stands the PARSONAGE. It occupies a gentle rise of ground, and is shaded and embellished as we have already described. Below it, on either side of Main Street, as far down as the great oak at the "four corners," are many delightful residences; and there are a good many families in the street next to the Parsonage on the south, that leads to the west.

The active business of the village is done above the bridge. A large number of fine dwellings are there, interspersed among stores, shops, and offices. The Academy is there, so also the principal Hotel, the Blacksmith's Shop, the Furniture Warehouse, the Carpenter's Works, Post-Office, Book Store, and Reading-Rooms.

That the principal points of interest in the village, including many of the private residences, may be represented to the eye in one view, I have drawn a ground plan of the whole, which can be traced at leisure.



PLAN OF EDGEFIELD.

CHAPTER VI.

DEACON HARTWELL AND OTHER VILLAGERS.

PERHAPS you would like to know something about the people of Edgefield Parish, more than you can understand simply by the mention of their names. I will then describe a part of them, and tell you where they live, as their dwellings are found on the preceding plan. You see by that where the church is, where the Academy and the Parsonage are, and several other dwellings and objects of importance. Indeed, a large part of the buildings and places are specified. But as yet you do not know the peculiarities that attach to the inhabitants. These are extremely various. While there are but few foreigners as permanent residents in the town, there are many persons who entertain notions quite foreign to one another, and at least persons whose business and modes of life differ very widely from each other.

Deacon Hartwell resided, at the time I speak of, in the house which is numbered *four* in the plan. He was one of the old inhabitants, whose noble farm of two hundred acres was the pride of his heart, if any pride he allowed in it.

He was nearly seventy years of age, and an active, industrious, hale man. His house was ever open to friends that visited him, or called on him. He was a firm, exemplary Christian, and many a one will forever remember his faithfulness with gratitude and joy. He had great influence in the Parish, and especially over such men as Esquire Peters and Dr. Alexander, two of the best-educated men among us, and themselves reciprocally influential. He was a large man, with a square-built frame, a firm and rather settled and severe countenance, especially against all folly, but expressive of truth, of kindness, in respect to goodness and honest virtuous endeavors. He was liberal in support of the Parish, but that was his greatest idol. He was a friend to all benevolent objects of the day, but if he pinched any way, he always contrived that the Parish should not suffer. He was willing to bear a good part of the duty of sustaining prayer-meetings, as willing to listen to an exhortation as to give one, yet he would sometimes grow restive, and I have seen him rise with a dark thunder cloud on his brow, and visit with honest indignation some luckless, short-sighted victim of his displeasure, who had in his zeal become dogmatic, or, perhaps, simply wandered too far into things imaginative and scriptureless. The deacon was, in general, mild, reasonable, and patient. But you could not drive him, nor blind him, nor coax him. He held to reason and truth. Himself obedient to every just precept, he could see no virtue in others who sought by some device to escape from duty, and to conceal the truth. It is said of him that on one

occasion, having tried every reasonable way to make a vicious horse he owned go forward, and it still refusing, that he drew his gigantic fist upon him, and so dexterously struck a blow under the ear, as to prostrate him to the earth in a moment, after which the animal rose, shook himself, and went forward as directed. He believed that all the members of the Parish were bound to pay something to support the gospel. He would by no means excuse the Widow Hill, who had quite a property, and was a member of the church, although she availed herself of a legal technicality in the case of widows, and sought to avoid the moral and memberly duty. Nor would he listen to Miss Wealthy Scribner's plea that she was unmarried, and possessed of small means. He contended that all the property in the society should be held under the same obligation. Whether one were rich or poor, married or single, he should *feel the duty*, and besides feeling, he should do. Accordingly, the Committee of the Parish, and the people, though frequently disappointed, were not much surprised that the deacon should head the subscription for the salary with fifty dollars, when *they* thought he would, and ought to, put down sixty. But the deacon always said, "You must go to everybody, make each one subscribe something; it is the only true, and, indeed, the only benevolent course. What costs nothing, is nothing valued."

The Committee came back to him once, and said that John Smith the shoemaker, who had usually subscribed

three dollars, refused to give over one, on account of the deacon giving below his average.

"Tell John Smith," said the deacon, "to satisfy his own conscience, and let my duty alone." When the Committee told John Smith what the deacon had said, his hand trembled as he took the pen and wrote down *three* dollars. Afterwards, when John Smith fell sick, and was laid by from work four or five weeks, the deacon sent him a present of ten dollars.

Mrs. Hartwell was a lady of the most benevolent and amiable character in the world. She was a real Christian, too; I doubt whether the minister's wife was a more pious woman; and she had a winning way with her. I think it was natural to her to be good, for I have observed that she was just as kind in her tones of voice to a poor workman, or beggar even, as to a visitor, or a rich and great man. She was an exceedingly industrious woman, and had a personal oversight of her family and work. Her house was a model of neatness and order, notwithstanding the business of Deacon Hartwell necessarily drew around him a great many persons, some of them not the most neat in respect of manners and dress. I never saw her in a flurry, though often in haste and hurry. She turned off her work as sweetly as her periods, and if a stranger or a friend called, she was ready to see him almost immediately. She did not require fifteen, twenty, or thirty minutes to arrange her toilette and room, but being always in a respectable plight, reasonable and respectable people were satisfied. Though

both she and her husband were truly hospitable, and kept a room on purpose to accommodate ministers or other good persons who might call on them and desire the shelter of their roof for a night, yet they were seldom imposed upon. Their carriage, though easy, frank, and polite, was also dignified, and kept at a proper distance persons who were too officious or presuming. Their children were Wilder, John, Angeline, and Jonas.

Angeline was a bright, gay, intelligent young lady, who seemed to know everything, and could do everything but sing. The deacon was no singer, but Jonas was a musician, and very fond of his flute. Wilder the elder, who was married, and lived in the village at number *eighteen*, having a large meadow farm on the east of his house, was also fond of music. Angeline sat with her father and mother in the family slip at church. Wilder and Jonas belonged to the choir. Jonas played the flute, while Wilder sang bass. Angeline was beautiful, and tall, and fascinating, but at nineteen she was entirely free from any engagement, and none of the young men of Edgefield seemed at all likely to carry her off. Jonas was something of a dashing young blade, and often gallanted the young ladies to singing-schools, sewing-societies, and so forth, and some of the more sober of the old people thought that he was a little too wild for a son of Deacon Hartwell. Wilder was, unfortunately, rather a selfish and close man. He was neither a very bad man, nor a very good one. He was exceedingly fond of money, and put off religion to acquire riches. But

everybody said he never would make good the deacon's place. John resided in the State of New York, and was highly respected as an intelligent farmer. There were not a few who said : " We must get all we can out of the deacon while he lives, for the society will suffer if Wilder gets the money ; and Jonas is a rattle-headed boy,—we don't know what he will do."

Dr. Alexander's house is number sixteen. The doctor was a little past the meridian of life, but not at all disqualified for his professional practice or study. He was a man of much personal dignity, but easily unbent, and threw around him a great charm by his familiar conversation and instructive remarks on all subjects. He began life with the elementary law studies, but having broken his arm by a fall, and being otherwise afflicted for the whole of one winter, he was so much pleased with the attention of his physician, and so observant of his practice, and entertained such kind sentiments towards him for his own recovery, that he altered his purpose and began to study medicine. He was known by everybody in town, and it would almost seem, out of town. He was highly respected by his fellow physicians, and had a large and eminently successful practice. He was a consistent, family-altar, praying christian. One of the best and most intelligent men of Edgefield, and yet he never could obtain the vote of the town to represent it in the General Assembly. He was everything else, committee-man, school examiner, temperance delegate, referee in important disputes ; *this* he never could carry. The best

off-hand speaker in town, with a clear idea of things; the man to give the town honor in the Legislature; yet Henry Billings, the blacksmith, who lived at number *thirty-six*, and was rather a hard drinker, or John Evans, a noisy politician, with a blustering manner in everything, residing at number *thirteen*, or farmer Stratton, a plain and quite respectable man, who resided over the creek at number *nineteen*, would always throw him out of an election. So the Doctor staid at home. He had considerable property, and great taste for pomology, horticulture, and gardening in general. There was no more genial atmosphere where a friend sat down, than in his house; no place where the hours were better spent, for he was instructive in his discourse, and religiously inclined at all times. If his practice ever suffered in a rivalry with brother practitioners, it was as much owing to his own neglect as to their skill and success, for he would occasionally devote more time to study, theory, conversation, and even to horticulture, and to society affairs in general, than was consistent with an uninterrupted professional popularity. But the doctor's failings, like some other men's virtues, were the least conspicuous traits in his character and daily life. Mrs. Alexander was everything affectionate, kind and intelligent, a real *help-meet* for her husband, with whom, for more than forty years, she had pursued the paths of life, cheering him in adversity, and rejoicing with him in his successes and prosperity. Three lovely boys, six, ten, and fifteen years of age, they had followed to their graves, in our secluded and peaceful cemetery in

the grounds covered with oaks and pines, ~~there~~ rise high above the village, in the rear of the church. They had left them but one son, a young man of feeble health, about twenty years of age, and who, having finished an Academical course was now, with a devotion that separated him almost wholly from society, pursuing medical studies at the University. One widowed daughter resided with them. She was, in wit, in memory, in legendary lore, in the recital and love of poetry, in daring, in the love of her friends, in literary criticisms, in her love of the past, and fondness for nature and study of character, her father's exact duplicate. With him she delighted to rove, to climb the mountains, to visit the distant metropolis, to trim the garden and the shrubbery walks and grounds, to read, to converse, to sympathize, to pray. She was a pious, earnest, helpful Christian, laborious on the Sabbath in the pleasing task of the Sunday school, and bountiful in her charities. Early left a widow, but seemingly above all human weakness, she wept, if at all, with her fatherless children, before God in secret. She knew the way to a sufferer's heart, and many, who from her public manner thought her wanting in the gentleness of woman, found, when illness or misfortune opened an avenue for her nature to reveal itself, that she was a true daughter of womanly affections and grace.

On C street no one lived between Main street and the river ferry-house, number *forty-one*, on account of the high water in flood time. So on B street. The ferry-house is number *forty*. There was a cluster of houses on C street

west of Main, where a large furnace establishment owned by Jones & Wilcox was situated on the Creek, number *twenty-nine*. Mr. Jones lived in a picturesque and rather handsome cottage at number *twelve*, a little retired from the street in a pleasant grove. Mr. Wilcox at number *twenty-six*. They employed fifty or sixty men, and were considered wealthy. The Post-Office was at number *fourteen*. My house number *seven*, and Mrs. Herricks was opposite. Between the church and the Academy there were two or three stores besides Dr. Alexander's house. The large Hotel of the village was number *seventeen*. John Smith occupied a small shop numbered *twenty*. He made and repaired shoes for his whole living, and was a useful character in the village. But he had successively changed from one political party to another, from one *ism* to another, from one newspaper to another, from one store to another, from one religious denomination to another, until he had given permanency to the following phrase in Edgefield, "as firm as John Smith." John was a light-built, smokey faced, sharp featured man, with small eyes sunk back in his head; he had a sharp-keyed voice, and a great flow of words, and his shop was a perpetual talking gallery of politics, religion and gossip. When he walked abroad, his hands were always thrust deep into his pockets, and his face considerably inclined to the ground. But he was now more fixed than usual in his religious creed, believing in Saints Perseverance and Election, "*TOTO CÆLO*," and *said* he would die, if it were necessary, for our minister, Mr. Williams.

Number *one* is the Congregational church. Number *two* is the Academy. Number *fifteen* is the cemetery. Esquire Peters lived at number *twenty-seven*, in a rich house, with ample grounds, very tastefully laid out. His wife was a New York lady, and frequently the house was full of New York friends. When these family city friends arrived, then there was great romping over the village and shouting in the fields and groves. This was a happy and good family, though Esquire Peters was more for business and hard work, Mrs. Peters for show and pleasure. They had several well-educated and agreeable children. Mrs. Burgess, a valuable lady, a widow sixty years old with one daughter unmarried, resided at number *eight*; a married son at number *ten*; a daughter at *twenty-three*. There was a cluster of houses at the great oak four corners; a store, a shop, and a small hotel. There was another cluster at the factory works, number *thirty-seven*, on B street, owned by Marcus Street & Son, who resided at number *eleven*, and employed forty or fifty workmen. At number *nine* there dwelt two elderly unmarried sisters by the name of Breakwell, who were first and foremost in every good work. They were very tall and rather delicate ladies, becomingly, and I may say, genteelly dressed at all times, with pale, though very cheerful countenances. They were indefatigable readers of history. They devoured Hume, and Gibbon, and Rollin, and Goldsmith, and Smollet, and everything *reliable* among the more modern. They never closed a book till midnight from any yieldings to weariness, or considerations of the



MIDNIGHT READINGS.

morrow. Though neither was handsome, the elder was as good looking as the younger, and although neither of them was married, the elder had the same opportunity as the younger, both having, for the same reasons, declined the same individual. The Sunday never came with heat or cold, with rain or snow, when they were absent from the church. Their only brother was a short, thick-set, jovial bachelor of forty-five, who was the town surveyor. As their parents were dead, they all lived with a venerable widowed aunt, a person of great practical knowledge of the world, by whom they were much better cared for, than they would have been if left to themselves. A great many excellent families, and some rather singular ones, lived along the street north and south of the Parsonage, and westerly, outside of our chart. An interesting young couple resided at number *six*; Mr. and Mrs. Sweetser. Mrs. Sweetser was much attached to her young family of children, and seldom went abroad, and Mr. Sweetser was a hard-working, plain, but very intelligent farmer, who was anxious to pay for his place, and was constantly at home ploughing, planting, carting, hoeing, blasting rocks from his meadows, and the like. In the winter he, several times, kept the village school in his district. Their house was retired, but it occupied a very pleasant site, and was much visited by the villagers. In summer and autumn what delicious cherries, pears, apples and peaches grew there! They were very quiet and plain people, but none lived in Edgfield who were more esteemed, or who were more worthy. Mr.

Sweetser was the son of an intelligent farmer, who also was a Justice of the Peace, the first his inheritance, the second his acquisition. He brought up his family in the highest degree moral and religious, and taught them by his own example, in his trials and sore bereavements, to confide their all in God. Young Mr. Sweetser was a man of a large, or rather tall and strong frame, but with all his sedateness and reserve of manner, amounting to an uniformal but happy dignity, he wore a pleasing, approachable countenance, and was a man of a very cheerful, hopeful, christian heart. *His children obeyed him.* His wife loved and revered him.

The Methodist church is number *five* on the plain, approached from C street. The winding course of Cedar Hill Creek, as it is laid down in the plan, was caused by a ridge of high hills on its eastern side to the junction at *thirty*. Mr. Irvings resided at number *twenty-one*. Mr. Simonds at *twenty-two*. Miss Wealthy Scribner at *thirty-one*. At number *thirty-two* was the small cottage of the Sexton. At *thirty-three* was Captain Abram's residence, the pious octogenarian. At *thirty-four* Deacon Willard's mills, and house. The store of Colonel Arrs was at *thirty-five*.

CHAPTER VII.

SHRUBBERY FESTIVAL.

PARSONAGE property, as such, is very apt to deteriorate in value, and it is a reasonable cause of satisfaction to the Parish, if the occupant be a man who will take the proper care of it. Societies most unfrequently regret, in the course of time, the purchase of such property. If they were always sure of the right sort of men to take the care of the buildings and other premises they would almost uniformly prefer to own a parsonage, because the subject of a place for the minister to live, is then settled in two or three respects, viz.: as to the questions, "can he live anywhere?" "can he live in a central place?" If not "in a central place" will the parish be satisfied? If the people decide to build a parsonage and to locate it in a certain position, they are afterwards satisfied on that point. But it frequently happens that where the minister is obliged to hire a dwelling house, he cannot procure one that is centrally located, and if the people have a tendency that way, it is easy to speak about it, if he locates himself rather more to the south of the Parish than to the north. The Rev. Mr.

——, hired a house on the top of a long steep hill. The people said he did it to avoid being called on, and then refused to visit him. By-and-bye he was dismissed. The Rev. Mr. ——, hired a house a mile out of the centre, on a poorly-worked and crooked road, *he* said, for the greater comfort in meditation and study, but the *people* said, to have an excuse for neglect. These complaints were especially raised by those who lived at the greatest distance from him, or were the least able to climb hills. The Rev. Mr. ——, preached in one town and hired his house in another, because he found it absolutely impossible to rent one in his own Parish. Now, it is for the peace and prosperity of the Society to own a Parsonage, and yet it is property which is not always the most lucrative.

Our Parsonage has been twice much injured by fire, in consequence of the carelessness of servants. It has sometimes been occupied by a minister with a large family of rather wild boys and girls, who have in their noisy gambols, and hard sports, broken in the walls of the rooms, hacked the doors and window-casings with their hatchets and knives, shattered the glass, soiled the paper, and oiled the floors. It will sometimes happen that it is occupied by a minister who don't want any trouble of the premises on his mind, and says it is a poor Parsonage, manse and glebe, that can't take care of itself. Under his administration the fences fall, the unruly cattle make a range of ploughland and meadow, as well as of the pastures; the shrub-oaks, and alders, and laurel, overspread the land, and unless the Parish directly

interferes, the place would soon be rendered worthless. There are ministers who delight to cultivate various fruits, and so take much pains to graft the trees, and to procure new ones, and keep the fruit orchards in a good state—who take pleasure in gardening and in horticulture generally, but a good many seem to have little if any regard for these things, at least not enough to be at any private expense to keep the place even as good as they found it. But a Parsonage is built and owned for the Brotherhood. Why should not the present occupant have some wish to place it in a state that will be agreeable to him who shall succeed him? Why not willingly contribute his share of the labor and money that may be necessary to make it a sweet retreat, an inviting Paradise of green, and beauty, and love, to him that shall afterwards go there for repose from the labors of the Parish? The people, I say, regard it as a great gain to them if the minister has some common sense in these matters, and is neither unwilling nor afraid to manifest it by some daily attention to their property in his charge. If they see this, they are very apt, I find, to assist him, and make his labors as light as possible, and to take a pride in keeping the place both comfortable and inviting. But when our minister, the Rev. Mr. —, neglected the Parsonage till it was a wilderness-farm, a paper-windowed manse, and a weed-o'er-grown garden, there was not a person to be found who would move a finger to repair any part of it, or to carry him a single choice tree for the orchards, or plants for the garden.

Mr. and Mrs. Williams show so much taste in all their

errandments, and so much attention to the garden, and so much interest in pomology, and such a true passion for the beautiful in nature and art, that our Parish people have been quite aroused to the improvement of the Parsonage. Mr. Williams, with thick gloves on his hands, prunes the orchard, or he plants choice trees, or he builds an arbor and trains his vines. He, with the advice, and according to the wishes of his wife, forms new plans for the garden, its borders, its mounds, its walks, its beds, its fruits. He suffers no gates to swing open to the highway, for unruly cattle to throng in and rush to his meadows and fields. He plants his fields with the greatest care, and in good season. He hires men to assist him, and pays them their charges without grumbling against the Parish.

Never was there a more agreeable party assembled at the Parsonage, than the one I saw there in May following Mrs. Williams coming here. By agreement there were twenty or thirty young ladies together, with choicest roots and plants from their own gardens and plant-nurseries, in stout gloves, with trowels and small rakes and spades, to fill up Mrs. Williams' flower borders, and help her dress them. And many little boys and girls were there, and several of our young gentlemen, and a few of the elder people.

Mrs. Williams was appointed chief directress of the garden, and Mr. Williams general overseer. The elderly gentlemen and the more athletic young men, were appointed committee on trees. The elderly ladies committee on con-

sultation, and the young ladies and gentlemen, not otherwise designated, committee on borders, and plants. The boys were a committee on bonfires and wheel-barrows, the girls, on little baskets and holding plants and seeds.

A merry, merry May-day time it was, and as profitable as cheerful and gay. The sun gladdened them with his liveliest beams, the earth was in a proper state for the work, the time of the spring appropriate to the plants and seeds. The garden looked sweetly at sundown, so smooth, so new, so dark and rich; so tastefully laid out, with its broad main circle, leading to the pool, its curving walks to the arbors, its mounds surmounted with urns, and its large heads of splendid box along the entrance aisle.

Several apple, pear, peach, and plum trees of rare fruit were brought, and under Mr. Williams' directions, were set out in the ground. May they long live and thrive for the enjoyment of the pastor, and for the good of all who shall come after him.

The ladies having brought with them several baskets of refreshments for tea, when the work was as far advanced as the day would allow, they resolved themselves into a committee *for* the whole, and having spread out the tables in a most attractive manner in Mr. Williams' large dining-room, the gentlemen were most of them easily persuaded to take tea before they left.

From one period to another since that time, similar gatherings have taken place there, and quite a desire is expressed among the Parish people, who have any taste for these

things, to have an invitation to the Shrubbery Festival at the Parsonage.

We doubt whether there is in New England a more agreeable Parsonage, manse and glebe, than ours. The house is large, the rooms are warm and well arranged, and are kept in good repair. The yards and garden-grounds are richly ornamented with trees, shrubbery, and plants. The farm-lots are ample and productive.

If we can be sure of their good occupancy, the Parish will make all reasonable sacrifices to keep the house and lands in the same state as now, rather improving than suffering them to decline.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SCENE AT THE PARSONAGE.

It was in this village of industry, of singular order and beauty, among a people of true piety and considerable intelligence, that Mr. Williams our pastor was, by the Providence of God, placed. Mrs. Williams soon made it manifest to the people, that she was a person in many respects eminently qualified to assist our pastor in his great and arduous labors, and to do great good in her position. She was not forward in the pursuit of society, and at the same time she did not avoid an acquaintance, nor shrink from reasonable duties. Soon after she came, an elder sister followed her, and consented to stay for a time and assist in the care of her family and house. This was a great help to Mrs. Williams, as she was enabled to give more of her time to cultivating an acquaintance with the Parish. Miss Martha, the sister, possessed a retiring disposition, and nothing gave her more pleasure than to contribute to her sister's happiness and usefulness. I have often thought, when passing an hour in the evening in their society, Mr. Williams having finished the important and perhaps laborious duties of the

day, and seated himself with them, his book or paper in hand to read to them, while his wife plied the noiseless needle, and the elder sister with her rocker in a favorite corner, sat in a listening attitude, with suspended knitting, and occasional remark of quaint good humor and sense, that they were not only a truly happy family in themselves, but a blessing to the place as an *example of household life*. Mr. Williams had enough to do for any man, of whatever strength or genius. His work, Oh! what a great and heaven-appointed employment, never done; never came the time when he could say "it is finished"—"I have *done* all that which thou gavest me to do." But his duty remained to watch for souls. One soul, if converted, would fill heaven with praise; one soul, if lost, would add to the eternal wailings of the pit. One soul, if saved, would help to augment the number around the throne of the Redeemer; one soul, if lost, would lead others to the world of despair. Mr. Williams felt the great need of faithfulness. He prayed for a right heart. He besought God's aid in his labors; and that he might not stand in the way of a blessing, he renewedly gave himself and all he had to the Saviour. He was devoted to his study as his time and strength would permit. He called abroad upon his people, and performed all the duties that, as a pastor, devolved on him. But in these, no more than in his household life, did he set forth a worthy blameless example. His house was a well-arranged, industrious, intelligent, sacred house. It was his usual custom to attend his evening devotions immediately after tea, and sel-

dom did he allow the presence of any company, or the pressure of any business, to interfere with this solemn household act.

Occasionally I was present (either having taken tea with the family, or on business of some sort with Mr. Williams) at the hour of devotions; and every such scene remembered, is fresh and pleasing to-day as at the time. Once I called to confer with the pastor on the propriety of helping the young family of Hiram Willys, the lawyer, who had by intemperance, reduced himself and them to great poverty. His wife we all thought was a pious woman, although she did not belong to the church.

Waiting a moment in the sitting-room with Mr. Williams, till his wife came in, (I thought, it is true, that I hurried the minister from his supper,) I said, "And what shall be done for this family—they ought not to suffer for Hiram's intemperance."

"They are entitled," said he, "to our sympathy and assistance. We can do something for them by prayer. But we must also give them clothing, protection, food."

"Willys is himself a vagabond," said I, "a useless, profane, idle, vulgar fellow. It is of no use, or very little, longer to attempt anything for him, but I agree with you that the family must have something done for them."

"Let us not despair of *him*," said he. "Many a poor fellow like him has been reclaimed. And who is at liberty to set bounds to the grace of God? He knows, he sees his

case. And to save guilty creatures, even such as he—such as he, CHRIST DIED.”

“I grant it, Sir, but he has been thrice to jail already on complaint, and he has broken all his pledges, and seems to be incorrigible. If you give garments to the family, or food, he will sell them, as he will the Bible itself, for rum. He is, in my opinion, almost hopeless.”

“Can you not pray for him?”

“Hardly, hardly, Sir, the prayer of faith.”

“But what says the Scripture? Pray in faith, ask in faith, nothing doubting. Pray always, and not faint. Besides, what were we ourselves but for the mercy of God?”

A loud knocking at the door interrupted us. Mrs. Williams and her sister came in rather hurriedly, and politely bowing to me, spoke to Mr. Williams to hasten out and meet an intemperate man, who appeared bent on coming into the house. But before he could leave the room, a man with a red gleaming face, a ragged garb, and a slouched hat, gained the door, and we were all immediately confronted with him. Taking off his hat, his black entangled locks fell over his scarred forehead, and gave their shade to his fiercely gleaming eyes in the absence of his hat brim. We all trembled a little at the savage aspect of a man who had made wretched a life that might have been one of usefulness and happiness, and who, under the violence of his intemperance, might commit any sin that such a state should prompt him to. We trembled, not for our own safety, but before a man who had debased and ruined himself; before

one scarred by crime within and without; before a human creature more desperate than a beast of the forest, in the toils of the hunter; before a man with human tongue all corded up by vice; with a heart untenanted by human blood; the source no more of vital action to the thousand carriers of the human life. We trembled for him, for *her*, for *them*. We trembled as we thought of the last sentence uttered in our brief conversation. "And what were we ourselves, but for the mercy of God?"

Stepping one foot forward, and throwing back the hair from his face, he cast his hat on the floor and put his foot on it. He then drew from his pocket an old worn, soiled, and time-begrimed wallet which he hurled on the carpet, saying, "fill it, fill it, an old hat is good enough—any-way—but who can stand—an empty purse? Nobody. If you've a quarter, or a shilling, give it to me. I'm in a desp'rate case; I hav'nt had a *drop* for six hours, and the last I got with a loaf of wife's bread, stolen from her, ha! ha! Fill it, will ye—hey?"

"Mr. Willys," began Mr. Williams.

"Call me Hiram, or drunken Willys. I'm no Mr.; that's gone *also*."

"Well, Hiram, you used to be called Mr. You will allow the minister still to give you the same title. He won't abuse you, nor hurt you."

"I know you, I know you; you preach to folks to be good, don't ye? But why ain't they good—why ain't I good?"

"That is very easily answered."

"No, it is'nt, neither. I've tried all my days to answer it, and could'nt."

"The Saviour of sinners has said, 'how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not*.' He says that men will not come to him that they may have life."

"Well, who cares ; rum's rum ; and when we want it *that's* the greatest,—conscience ain't nothing—why ain't conscience stronger—hey ?"

"Ah, my poor friend, you have let your adversary overthrow your fear of God, and hide from you the fear of death and the judgment—"

"Yes, I know it."

"And also your sense of duty to your family."

"My family !" said he, with bitterness.

"To be sure, they are entitled to your love and support."

"I can't support them and me too. They are a bother, and always cost me every dollar I 'arned—what's the poor man to do—hey ?"

"He must keep up his courage, keep sober, keep good natured, and confide in the Lord his God."

"The Lord won't hear drunkards."

"He will hear the humble."

"But how shall a wild, crazy drunkard get humble ?"

"He must forsake his cups, repent of his intemperance and immediately go to God in prayer."

"Oh, dear,—*oh*, DEAR ! Prayer ! You can pray. Yes

you are the minister. These are your folks. You all pray, I s'pose? But oh! Lord, what a fellow I am. I tell you, Parson, I never pray except when I'm drunk, and then I call on God to curse me. Say! now, do you pray—I know you don't—such prayers?"

Mr. Williams, seeing it was too much for his wife and sister to endure, and it being a painful scene to himself, said in his kindest manner, "Come, my good friend, sit you down here and join us in our family devotions, after that my wife will give you some supper, a cup of tea will revive you."

The poor man looked wildly about him, now at his hat, then at his person, and anon at the door, but finally sat down, crossed one limb over the other and leaned heavily and almost helplessly back in a corner of the room. By great efforts the family composed themselves to some degree of requisite calmness, and Mr. Williams read aloud one of David's penitential Psalms. Then sweet and trembling voices chanted a simple song of Zion, and Mr. Williams, after this, kneeling down, uttered an earnest, tearful prayer of thanksgiving and supplication. He called for the presence and power of the spirit of God in aid of the poor man's infirmity, and deliverance from his sin. The prayer broke out from his soul with strong crying and tears. There were many tears shed at that family altar then by all who bowed around it, and no one wept more *bitterly* than he who was there in his haggard and crime marked visage, and in his tottering and disjointed frame, and in the sunken

slough of a polluted life. Gathering himself up with desperation in the effort, before any one could prevent him, he had seized his hat and reached the door. In vain Mr. Williams rushed after him and in the kindest manner cried to him to return. He went thrashing down the yard, struck the gate with his foot, and with great, though unsteady strides, pushed his way up town. It was now becoming dark.

"Why! what a poor and desperate being," said Mrs. Williams.

"He is one of the most reckless, and perhaps incurable of the sons of crime," I answered.

"But he groaned so! and wept!" said she.

"Yes, he knows the language of prayer, and the path of duty. When he was but three years old he lost his mother, and his father, although a good and a pious man, could not restrain and govern him as he needed. His father, however, sent him to college, and it was there he became dissipated and wild. He finished his studies, both academical and professional, before his habit destroyed him, and nothing but his intemperance has kept him from a position of great influence at the Bar. He is naturally eloquent, and a man of decided talents."

"Is it possible!" said Mrs. Williams, "I have read and heard of similar cases, but I never before met with any person so fallen. And who is his wife—and what is she?"

"She is the daughter of General Sumners of W——, a

highly agreeable and fascinating young lady when married, and she now refuses to leave him."

"Poor creature!" said Mrs. Williams, "poor unhappy, ruined and abused one—yet faithful to the end."

Mr. Williams had seemed rather lost in thought during our conversation, but now he rose, and proceeded to button his coat, and prepare to go out. "It won't do, it will not do," said he, "to sit here, and let that man go home in his excitement to his family, or to grapple alone with his temptations and sins. I will go after him immediately, and if I do him no good may at least prevent some hurt."

His wife interposed and protested, the sister begged him not to go, and I told him that I would, feeble as I was, go myself and do anything he wished.

"No," said he, "I will go, I must go. I know the way to his house, I know him well. You stay here with the family till I return, which will be soon, and all will be well."

* * * * *

This was the commencement in the reform of a man of great natural and acquired talents, of commanding influence and eloquence, who was afterwards a dignified and honored member of the Congress of the United States.

* * * * *

Let no one smile at this. Have there not been things as strange?

CHAPTER IX.

THE AWAKENING.

It was a great pleasure to go to the Parsonage during the spring and summer months and in the autumn, after Mr. and Mrs. Williams took possession of it. How cool and pleasant was the shade of the great trees, how neatly were the grounds all brushed, and how charming were the roses that Mrs. Williams cultivated and reared with her own hands; how sweet the violet walks; how rich and varied were the plants and vegetables of the garden, and oh! how laden were all the trees in the orchard and along the garden walks with fruit. And then Mrs. Williams kept her house in perfect order, her tasteful arrangements conducing far more than expensive and showy furniture, to the happiest effect, and to the charm that all her rooms seemed to create.

Without envying her, many of the young ladies and the elder, for that matter, looked on her method but to copy it for themselves; and there was a great brushing up all over the Parish during the very first year this happy and exemplary couple passed with us.

And it was noticeable that directly as the autumn set in there were an unusually large number of weddings. Our young people seemed to appreciate the desirableness of cheerful homes to themselves, and the possession of a FRIEND, for life's weal or wo.

The society had increased in numbers and strength from the very first of Mr. Williams' settlement, and it now seemed to be steadily gaining ground. But the spiritual state of things rested heavily on the Pastor's mind. He felt the great necessity of a thorough awakening of the church, that a revival of religion in its power might be manifest to all, to the saving of souls. His earnest desires on this point sometimes drove sleep from his eyes, and deluged his face with tears on the Sabbath when in prayer. Often would he seem unable to speak through the violence of his emotions. It was not long before several young persons, in his own Bible class, became thoughtful. Some presently indulged a hope of the mercy of God. Small circles of prayer began to be formed. The young ladies' sewing circle became a serious, praying band. A large number of the impenitent in the congregation were awakened, and several heads of families were led to give themselves away to Christ and to commence morning and evening devotions at the family altar.

The feeling became so serious in the late months of autumn, and during the winter, that for several days or weeks, a stranger going through the village would be struck with the stillness that reigned in it—such an one as the

Sabbath day itself. The customary pleasures of the young were abandoned; balls, parties, games, drinking, shouting, and revelry of all kinds, Sabbath-breaking, and profanity seemed to be suspended, if not broken up. Mr. Williams gave himself to the work with the energy, and faithfulness, and love of a husbandman gathering in the autumn harvest. To him it was the harvest season of immortal souls. It would afford a most interesting and instructive, as well as affecting part of our narrative, could we copy and insert here extracts from his private journal of this period; or were there room for me to give the readers, from my own minutes and memory, but a small portion only of what this most thrilling and peaceful awakening furnished me. How it brought a man of strong, lively character and frame to his couch, and caused him to pray for mercy. How another in the prayer-meeting threw his arms around his pastor, exclaiming, "Oh! how I love the Saviour! how I love *you!*" It would show the aged man brought—even near the twelfth hour of life—to see the long-despised Saviour, most infinitely lovely and precious—the young and folly-pursuing rendered thoughtful, consistent, prayerful. One young man of great character and talents, a young lawyer, shut himself in his office to escape the influence that was breathed around him, but the spirit of the Lord infused itself even there, and he was brought humbly to repent of his sins, and to confess Christ. And by-and-bye it happened that a great way off among the distant Islands, he, by his eloquence and learning, held frequently large public

audiences, with the Lord Bishop presiding, in earnest attention, as he pleaded the great cause of missions, and of truth before them. And by-and-bye, also, he died, and a great gathering of civilians, and of the soldiers of the garrison, and of the people, spake out the certainty of his loss—of his worth—of the greatness and importance of his conversion to God! There were morning and evening meetings for prayer. Long ere the sun arose in the morning, an hundred would assemble in one public hall, to pour forth their supplications, and to lift up the voice of praise. And what the joy and reward of the faithful pastor? Oh, let that reward be measured in the future. It cannot be all known and expressed on earth. Nearly one hundred and fifty persons united at one time with the church, who were the fruits of this remarkable awakening. The whole of the period covered by this work, was nearly, if not quite, a year. No one can tell the change it wrought in the Parish. It immediately enlarged and strengthened the Church, and gave an impulse to every good work that was for a long, long time felt, and is so even to this day. I remember that on one occasion, perhaps it was near the end of the revival, though at a time when the church prayer-meetings were crowded and interesting, that one of the brethren proposed to the members who were present to vote, by rising, that they would regularly attend that meeting whenever it lay in their power. Nearly all, or quite all, voted accordingly, and the Vow seemed to have been an earnest one. It was a wonder to us all how full that prayer-

meeting continued for months—nay *years*—after it had been taken.

There were brought into the church at this time, among others, Mr. and Mrs. Irvings, Mr. and Mrs. Simonds, Horace Bancroft, Esq., the young lawyer, and Jonas Hartwell, also. Wilder came near to the kingdom of Heaven apparently, but could not be induced to enter, greatly to the disappointment and grief of his parents. Several young men on being converted, turned their attention immediately to a course of study preparatory to the ministry.

The church of Edgefield, was never so entirely aroused and active in a revival as in this. They appointed frequent days of fasting and prayer at the suggestion of, or in conjunction with, their pastor; they sent out their brethren two and two through the Parish, to converse and pray with the impenitent, and appointed and sustained prayer-meetings in all the school districts of the town. I cannot say how many evenings were thus spent by the brethren of the church, nor how many whole, and parts of days, were devoted to the work. They seemed all of them to regard it a solemn duty, and a positive happiness, to labor with their pastor to build up the Redeemer's kingdom. Deacons came from adjoining parishes to attend the meetings, and they not unfrequently returned home to declare what great things God had done for their own souls. And our brethren visited other parishes, and exhorted at prayer-meetings, as well as visited from house to house. Thus the work begun with us, was communicated to others. It spread from heart to heart, and

from town to town, so that the season is remembered as one of great religious concern in the whole vicinity of towns. Perhaps five hundred souls, during this awakening, were brought from nature's darkness to the marvellous light of the Gospel.

CHAPTER X.

THE LADIES' SEWING SOCIETY.

THE annual meeting of the Ladies' Sewing Society occurred in September. It was held at Dr. Alexander's. The afternoon was very fair, and as the officers of the Society were to make their report, and new directors were to be chosen, and Dr. Alexander's was so fine a place to visit, an unusually large number of ladies were present.

When Mrs. Williams arrived, accompanied by her husband, there was a general excitement among them. Mrs. Alexander and her daughter, Mrs. Hillhouse, received them with unaffected cordiality, and Mrs. Hillhouse gently chiding them for coming late, as she led them into one group and another of the busy workers, said, "Mr. and Mrs. Williams, ladies,"—"Mr. and Mrs. Williams, ladies." The ladies bowed and smiled, and some shook hands, and some made low courtesies, and others held back partly afraid, and sewed and knitted harder than ever, but there were no eyes or ears really turned away from seeing and hearing all that was said and done. Mr. Williams having been round the circle with his wife, and at last lost her by

the attractions that drew her one way and himself another, approached a group of ladies with laps full of cambric-work, who were as busy in conversation, as with their needles and scissors.

"Perhaps it would be well to inform her beforehand," said one of them in a low voice,—*"Hist!"*

"Let me not interrupt your conversation, ladies," said he, observing a slight embarrassment and hesitancy among them.

"Not at all, Sir," said Mrs. Street, a lady directress of the Society, "we are happy to see you on several accounts. Both yourself and Mrs. Williams are looking finely to-day, and it gives us the highest pleasure to notice it."

"Thank you, Madam; it affords us much happiness to meet you. We find it very pleasant afterwards, when at home, to speak to each other about the little incidents of a meeting like this, and especially about the nature and the results of your exertions."

"Oh! it is precisely my own remark to dear Mrs. Hartwell," said Mrs. Littleway, a simpering, talking widow lady of fifty or more, who was remarkable for her efforts at youth, and sentiment, and tasteful dress; "*the nature* of our toils, and self-denials—the *remarkable* results, are a study, indeed they are."

While Mrs. Littleway was rolling her eyes in expressive wonder from the ceiling to the floor, at this point in her "remark," Mrs. Street replied to the pastor,

"We do very little, with all the efforts we put forth, to

relieve any sufferings, or to promote any one object of good ; but, Sir, we would ever remember, that if the motive be good, the work performed, though it be very feeble and inefficient, is regarded by the Saviour of men, as though it were done to Him."

"Yes, though the work be in value only as a cup of cold water, it will not be forgotten or unrewarded."

"True, the Saviour has said this," she replied, "but I fear, Sir, that few will enter heaven even on the merits of that most simple and beautiful provision."

"Indeed !" said Mrs. Littleway. "Why how much you surprise me, dear Mrs. Street. I supposed that all our kind deeds would be remembered for us in the great day. And for myself, I am very frank to acknowledge that I never draw a bucket of water from the well to give a poor creature drink, but I think, 'This is what the Saviour will remember, for he has promised it ;' I must think, my dear friend, that you undervalue the promise."

"By no means," she answered, "if I comprehend it. But I never fail to remember the precise words of the Saviour in that remarkable promise, 'And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.' Now here is something done for Christ. Many a kind word you have spoken, many a bucket of water drawn, perhaps, and probably, that were not specifically in honor of Christ."

Mrs. Littleway confessed she performed many such acts from "the impulse of her own nature."

"Well, ladies," said Mrs. Hartwell, who was lady President of the Society, "let us, if you please, inquire of Mr. Williams what we shall do with the clothing which we have made this summer?"

So the ladies looked at him for a reply.

Mr. Williams did not wish to direct about it; he was willing to consult with them.

A good many ladies now gathered around. Various opinions were given as to the best disposition of the manufactured garments on hand. Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Hillhouse, and Angelina Hartwell, came into the group.

"Say, Mrs. Williams, do you know where it is best to send this clothing, and these goods of the Society?" inquired Mrs. Street.

Mrs. Williams was surprised at the question, and replied she did not. Meeting on the instant the eye of her husband, she noticed it intently fixed upon her, and then recalled to mind an affecting and truthful narrative which they had recently read together, of "THE PRAIRIE MISSIONARY."

"I do! I do!" she earnestly exclaimed. "Permit me, ladies, to say that I think there is a cabin in the far west, where reside a missionary and his wife, that your bounty will gladden and relieve beyond measure."

All the ladies expressed the utmost desire to know something about them.

"We have just received a little volume," she added,

“and we have read it with many, many tears. It is an account by the lady herself of the trials and disappointments they experienced, which if the half were true, were enough to entitle them to the prayers and sympathies of all who love the cause of missions.”

Such was the intense desire of the ladies to see the book, that Mrs. Hillhouse sent her little son Henry to the Parsonage for it. And Mrs. Williams read aloud to them some portions of the book, and described the general tenor of the narrative, till with one mind it was decided to send them the box, and to forward also what money they could raise, in a letter. Thus did they show that the revealing of true suffering in the cause of Christ, quickens the sympathies and the generosity of our nature, rather than deadens and affrights them.

A call on the ladies to attend to the report of the doings of the year, called together all the members. Miss Evelina Street read the paper. They had received one hundred and ten dollars in money during the year, and prepared clothing and other work sufficient to fill the box, designed now for the THE PRAIRIE MISSIONARY and his suffering family. They had clothed the poor children of Hiram Willys, and paid the schooling of old Mr. Cooper's grand-children, as well as clothed them. They had given ten dollars to Mr. William Black, a member of the church, who was in poor health, and whose family were somewhat needy. They had given fifty dollars to the society to help repair the Par-

sonage, and twenty-five dollars to the feeble church of West Edgefield.

Many of the ladies wept with joy as they recalled the little offerings of the year, and remembered how many pleasant seasons they had passed together, and how two of their beloved helpers had, during the same period, left them for the eternal world, Mrs. Lovelace and Mrs. Truewell.

"There is one other thing, ladies," said Mrs. Hartwell, "that must be attended to, and may as well be now. As this is the annual meeting, it is necessary to appoint officers for the year to come."

"Do the old all retire?" inquired Mrs. Hillhouse.

"All. There must be a new set throughout."

The ladies immediately nominated Mrs. Williams.

"Oh! no! no!" said she, "I must be excused. I cannot think of it. I am unacquainted, I am a stranger."

"Never mind," said several voices. "We cannot think of choosing anybody else."

"There's nothing to do," said Mrs. Littleway.

"But you do accomplish a great deal of work," she answered.

"We will take all the work on our own hands," they answered.

"But it is a great care. One should preside who is older, and experienced, and acquainted."

"That is not at all necessary. The Directresses will see to all the work, and help about appointments for the meetings."

"I am a stranger among you, and wish to be at liberty to form acquaintances in my own manner; ladies, *do* excuse me. There are others here who know you and what is to be done. Do, *do* excuse me.

"No, they could not think of it." Mrs. Littleway said it was always customary, and was expected of the minister's wife to be the President. And so the poor woman, *nolens volens*, was made President. (Mrs. Williams was really vexed at heart at the appointment. "So," said she to her husband when at home, "all the merit of this appointment lies in *being the minister's wife*. I am but an ignorant girl at best, or but a young lady, and know nothing of this business, and am a stranger too, but the honor *must be borne by me because I am the minister's wife!*"

Mrs. Williams being duly installed President, with the promise that she should have none of the care, (an exemption no one wishes to enjoy in an office which he is able to fill,) and Mrs. Hillhouse and Mrs. Peters, Directresses, and Angeline Hartwell, Secretary and Treasurer, made the best she could of the appointment, and with these ladies, in due time commenced a very promising career of duty.

Mr. Williams having staid tea, pronounced the blessing, and all partook of Mr. Alexander's hospitality with the greatest good humor, and soon after separated. Everybody rejoiced in the opportunity to confer the disposable honor on one so well qualified and worthy of it as Mrs. Williams.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PARISH VISIT.

So passed the summer and autumn. It was the determination of the Society to pay their minister a general visit at New Years'. This custom is now well established in many of our churches; and really, when proposed and managed with due consideration, it results in substantial aid to the Pastor, and in much happiness to the people. When New Years' arrived, therefore, the visit was made. I will mention the manner of it. I have already mentioned several valuable donations that were sent to him by different persons; some of these were made at the Parish visit. It was regarded as a very pleasant circumstance that the visit could be made by the light of a brilliant moon, and that a heavy fall of snow, three or four days previous to New Years', allowed of a merry sleigh ride and the jingling of bells to add to the excitement and joy of the occasion. It also enabled the farmers to draw the heavier loads of wood; which, by the way, were coming up into the yard of the Parsonage through the whole day.

"What a prodigious load of wood is that!" said the

Pastor to his wife, pointing to an enormous pile drawn by four yoke of oxen ; and which, having been cut sixteen feet long, rested on two sleds.

"How can they get into the yard?" she inquired.

"Indeed, that I had not thought of. We shall see."

The ladies raised the windows and smiled as the great bulk of wood passed safely through the wide gate and yard, to the wood-pile in the rear of the house.

"There! Whoa! whoa! whoa!!" shouted the teamsters.

"Good morning! Parson Williams," cried out Deacon Armstrong, who had a team in the gang, and a hand in the enterprize. "What do you think of *that*, hey?"

"It's enormous! Sir, enormous."

"It takes *oxen* to draw it, eh?" said the deacon.

"Mr. Williams," said Hugh Wallace, a neighbor of the deacon's, "will you please, Sir, bring a rule or four-foot stick and measure it; we want, out of curiosity, to see what it will measure, for perhaps somebody else will try to beat it."

Mr. Williams said he could make a rule, but the driver had one on his whip stick regularly notched off with his knife; and by actual measurement, the load was found to be more than four cords and a half!

"That'll do! that'll do, boys," said the deacon. "Now then let's throw it off, and beat it, they who can."

Before it was thrown off, in came Captain Wilkes, of the north end with a great load of hickory. And before he

was out of the way, Deacon Hartwell's man came in with a load of hay, and presently Mr. Sweetser with a large wagon load of straw. So they kept it up, going and coming, till three or four o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Williams received at this time fifteen loads of wood, or about twenty cords!

The evening was beautiful, and as soon as the house was well lighted, the people began to drive up with the merry bells of winter. Some of the old people came in the afternoon. Some of them took tea and left at sundown. All brought some *gift* to the Pastor and his wife. It was the people's visit, and as they invited themselves, they brought their own tea, and sugar, and cake, and biscuit, and pies, and jellies. In the evening the old Parsonage was completely jammed with company. Mr. and Mrs. Williams received all who came with as much ceremony and polite attention as was possible under the circumstances, but it was necessary, all the first part of the evening, to greet their friends near the PANTRY, or at the top of the *cellar stairs*, because every good mother, cook or pork-producer, esteems it half the pleasure at such a time to say to the donee, "*This is some of mine!*" And who shall complain if it is so; is it not a free gift, a generous gift, a carefully prepared or selected one—the BEST? Mr. Williams understood and appreciated this principle too well to overlook it, so he was ready to greet every one with a cheerful word, and with many expressions of admiration and pleasure as he received and had passed into the pantry, cellar, or loft,

whatever came into his hand. All the pantry shelves were filled with frosted cakes, plum cakes, cream cakes, fruit cakes, pies of every kind made in the most delicate manner, as rich and luscious as possible to be made. Jars were brought filled with jellies and sweetmeats. Pots with butter, lard and cream, tea, coffee, sugar, flour, meal, beef, pork, vegetables—enough of every kind for the entertainment of the vast company present, and for the family long time afterwards. But you enquire, “And pray, did Mrs. Williams have the trouble of receiving all these, or any part of them?” No—or very few. She was all about among the comers, now by the side of her husband, then in the parlor, anon receiving some delicate and appropriate gift deposited on the mantel or side table. “Did she and the family prepare the tables for the entertainment of this great company?” Oh! no. The ladies and gentlemen did all this. Mr. and Mrs. Williams sat down once or twice with their friends and drank tea after THANKS, but they were not allowed to exert themselves at all in any labors or preparations of this sort.

I would not forget to say that as one of the large chambers of the Parsonage had not been furnished or occupied by the family, it was at the visit completely furnished with everything necessary to its convenience. Mr. Williams received also twenty-five dollars worth of books for his study library, and a rich writing desk and chair. The young ladies brought Mrs. Williams two beautifully wrought Ottomans for her parlor, and Esquire Peters hung up in

it two large pictures, exquisite paintings of Alpine scenery, in heavy gilt frames, that were much admired by everybody.

Mrs. Williams delighted her guests with some of her rich songs, and music on the piano, and once the whole of the company sung together the sweet old music of "AULD LANG SYNE."

When the company had feasted, and sung, and chatted till the evening was pretty well advanced; and even the boys and girls had eaten cake and pie enough for a month, and filled their pockets, and little reticules, for an uncertain amount of time thereafter, Deacon Hartwell and Dr. Alexander called the attention of the party to some remarks from the pastor, and a prayer.

Mr. Williams stood near the door where he could best be seen and heard, and beside him was Mrs. Williams, holding in her hand a new and elegant lace-edged handkerchief, a gift from her friend Mrs. Hillhouse; the people gathered around and were as attentive as possible, while their Pastor thanked them for their generous remembrances of himself and family, so greatly exceeding anything that they had expected, and the ideas which they in their social circle had formed and expressed of it. He said he had never before been present at a like festival, and must say that he was happily disappointed in respect to the order which had characterized the evening for he had *heard* many things to the prejudice of these gatherings. He was most happy to bear his testimony to the contrary, and es

pecially rendered his thanks to all the ladies and gentlemen who had taken so much of the care of the evening from himself and his wife, and had secured every possible convenience to all assembled. He thanked them for the generous purse of gold which they had presented him, for the well filled pantry and larder, for the huge pile of fuel in the yard, for the barn loft filled with hay and straw, for the room filled with new and rich furniture, for their especial remembrances of Mrs. Williams, as of himself, his purse, his study.

I don't know what he could have said better. Everybody was pleased, and drew a long breath when he had concluded. The prayer which followed it was made in Mr. Williams' happiest manner. It was humble, it was grateful, it was fervent in thanksgiving and supplication, it acknowledged human dependence, it sought aid from heaven to enable every one to perform his duty as an accountable creature of God, it had a remembrance of the poor and suffering, and gave God the glory due unto his name for all that he had wrought in heaven above and in the earth beneath.

Some were present there who will never see the like assemblage again on earth. Before this year shall expire how many of those who then met will have paid nature's great debt, and gone hence to be with us no more.

The grounds all about the house had been filled up with sleighs, as one party after another drove up, and now as the

nine o'clock hour arrives, some are going, others linger. It is half past nine, others are driving out their sleighs. The bells ring most cheerily. It is a clear, cold, though not a gusty night. It is ten—most of the old folks are gone. But yet the rooms are not vacant. It is half past ten. The sleigh-bells jingle—the loads of young people drive off—away goes this—and away that party—some up—others down town—over west—down to the “hollow”—out to the factory—away over to the hills—jingle—jingle—jingle. It is eleven—the front door is locked and barred—the doors are all fastened—the lights burn dimly. Here and there one is extinguished, and all who remain are Mrs. Hillhouse, Angelina Hartwell, and Evelina Street, and they are folded up together in a corner, near the old Franklin stove! And here is the pastor, with candle borne above his head, in the pantry, peering up into the loaded shelves, and standing among the mementoes of this new, this rich, this extraordinary occasion. And anon he is in his study, gazing into those new and beautiful volumes, and reclining in that soft and wide-spreading arm-chair. There is an air of comfort in the room before unknown, and he lifts up a tearful eye, and a broken ejaculation of praise to God. Anon he goes down by the back stairs, and with candle in hand wanders away into his cellar, and looks about him there. Then he ascends, and slowly removes the fastenings of the door, and goes out into the moonlight to see the wood piled in such a bold manner in the wood-yard; and he goes within the barn, now filled to the rafters with hay and straw; and then

he walks around to see where the horses have stood by the trees and fences, and where the sleighs were turned round in the snow, and what a hard, highway-road the teams and light sleighs have made through his wide gate-way. Then, as calmly as he can, he returns and makes fast the door, and walks through the dining rooms where the fragments of the feast still lie, as they were left by his guests ; and hearing voices and feet above, away wanders he to join the company of his wife and the ladies in the newly-furnished chamber, where Mrs. Williams discourses her approbation quite in accordance with his.

The pastor feels grateful. He determines to labor more and more faithfully for his people. He rejoices in their liberality, as evincing generous, whole-hearted benevolent principles. If, so much is so freely done for himself, what may not be expected in behalf of the cause of Christ, his Lord, and Redeemer ?

It is midnight, and yet he does not sleep. The cold frost forms on the windows. He thinks of the poor and hungry, and wishes that some of his abundance might be shared with them. And when at last he closes his eyes, it is to dream that he is an almoner of Christ, to bear to the poor and suffering the precious fruits of salvation, even the provisions of grace and eternal life ! He bids them hunger no more, nor sorrow, nor suffer, for in Christ all tears are washed away, and all sorrow is removed for ever ! Sweet sleep ! Sweet, heavenly dream !

CHAPTER XII.

SALE OF THE SLIPS.

THE next thing that followed in order was the sale of the slips for the year. The Committee of the Society caused a notice to be given on the Sabbath that the sale would take place the following Tuesday night, at the church. They also nailed up a notice of the same in the porch. At the hour appointed, the church bell gave out its loud merry peal over the Parish; and, as it was good sleighing, a great many appeared at the sale. The committee were anxious to raise seven hundred dollars from the slips that year, because it had been proposed by many to raise the salary a hundred dollars, and they knew of no better or easier way to do it than by the sale of the slips. The sale began. Old Mr. Waters must have his slip at the usual price, for he is poor. The Misses Breakwell will give so much and no more. Deacon Hartwell, who did not like to change his seat, was run up to twenty-five dollars, Esquire Peters to thirty dollars, Dr. Alexander to twenty dollars, Marcus Street and son to twenty-five dollars. This was an advance of fifty per cent. on the previous year. The work having

begun so well, it was kept up a good while. But there were some who lost good seats by their unwillingness to bid up to what they were going, and went back surlily. Among these was Wilder Hartwell. "He'd have a slip for eight dollars, or not buy one—and a good one too." There were some who couldn't see the propriety of running up the slips, or paying any more salary. But the committee worked hard to suit everybody. Wilder at length bought a good side slip for six dollars, and as his wife "liked a window-seat," he was satisfied; "as for himself, he didn't want any." The people kept going and coming through the evening, till past nine o'clock. Then the committee brought the sale to a close. They had already disposed of one hundred slips, and raised six hundred and fifty dollars. There were about twenty slips on their hands, rather poor choices most of them, but they were all wanted, and would make out the seven hundred dollars.

Many of the people accordingly left, all were fast making off, when a man hastily came in and inquired,

"Well, Mr. Committee, which is my slip?"

"Oh! dear me, whew, whew, this now is—too—bad. Colonel, I declare to you that I entirely forgot your directions. We have sold all the main aisle slips except these at the bottom, and let's see—on the sides—but—let's see—number sixty-eight—and seventy—"

"Hang your side-aisle slips, what do I want with 'em. I told you to get me a thirty dollar slip, and you said you *would*."

"I know it, I know it. How in the world I could forget it—"

"Forget it—you didn't forget it. No business man could forget his duty at such a time. You ain't fit to be a committee man. I'll have a middle slip or leave the Society—mind you, a good one too." And away he went.

"Now isn't that too bad?" inquired Mr. Street, turning with an anxious countenance to his colleagues of the committee, Mr. Sweetser and Deacon John Willard. "It is astonishing that I should forget his wishes. And the Colonel is so easily roused up, I don't know but we shall lose him."

"Hurrah! what is to pay here to-night?" inquired a gentleman going by of some that were leaving, whom he met on the side-walk in front of the church.

"Nothing but the sale of the slips, I believe."

"The sale of the slips—what—zounds—why didn't I know of this?"

So he turned short on his heel, and hastened into the church just as Colonel Arrs came muttering out. This gentleman was Mr. White, who had become of late a meeting-going man, though formerly the very opposite, and quite a ranter against the society. He was a man of considerable influence, and it was hoped that he would become a Christian, and be a staunch helper in the Parish. He hurried up the aisle.

"What—*what* is all this—slips selling—all over—I not informed of it. Why Mr. Street, what does this mean?"

"Dear Sir," said Mr. Street, "did you get no word of this sale? Why where were you last Sabbath, and where have you been the last week?"

"Out of town—out of town—surely, Sir, and this very hour have returned—knew nothing of all this. Are you all sold—all done?"

"Why not exactly; we have no very good seats though to offer you. Here are numbers sixty-eight and seventy four not sold; very tolerable—not the best seats—"

"No, no, a good deal short of that. Why in the world didn't I hear of this? I must have a slip—a good one—a good desirable slip. Perhaps my wife has attended to this matter. She, good soul, loves the church."

"Ah! well," said Mr. Street, "I remember to have seen her here with several other ladies, and perhaps she has a slip with some one else, bid off in his name."

"Yes! very likely. Adieu, gentlemen." Coming back, he said, "Keep sixty-eight for me till to-morrow at nine o'clock, for I'll have that if my wife has not already secured one." And away he went.

"There is no other way," said Mr. Street, "to satisfy the Colonel but to give him my seat."

"Pshaw, pshaw," said Deacon Willard, "I'd do no such thing. Keep your own seat; let him do as poor folks do, when he can't do any better."

"But you see, Deacon Willard, it is my fault that he has lost his slip. And we must humor such men, or the society will suffer. I'll give him my seat."

"You make a great sacrifice, Sir," said Mr. Sweetser.

"No, it is of no great moment. If Mr. White takes sixty-eight, I will have seventy-four. So we are through for this evening. The pastor has number ONE, as usual. We have unsold eighteen or twenty slips. So, gentlemen, let us hurry off while we can, for somebody else will drop in if we linger."

Folding up their papers, the committee left the house.

"Well, if this don't beat all slip-sales that ever I saw or heard of," muttered to himself the spare, weather-beaten sexton, who wore a slouching broad-rimmed and broken-in hat, and a faded outside garment that reached below his knees, with large pockets at the sides. "Who ever heard of slips selling for e'en a' most seven hundred dollars at one sale before? And what's it all for? Nobody knows. Raise the salary? Salary! Just as tho' the salary was'n't raised a'ready! Bin raising it ever since I was a boy. Let them raise *my* salary, I'm poor. But Colonel Arrs must have the best and biggest slip in the church! Yes, just as though Marcus Street wan't as big as he! And he'll pay thirty dollars for it? Wher'd the money come from if his honest debts were paid? This is the way folks live now days. Once, five dollars would buy the best slip in church. But now it's thirty dollars, and next year it'll be forty! And some folks must have the middle aisle or none—jist as if they were an honor to a meeting-house if they sat there, and no where else! Can hear better and see better in the middle aisle? No such thing; it's pride. Who'll get to

heaven first, I wonder, Mr. Pride, or Mr. Humble? Here's one hundred and fifty dollars raised mor'n last year. Pretty well, I think, for the old society. And who's to get it all, the minister and the choir? No, the sexton shall have his share, or *I'll* grumble. I work hard for 'em, build the fires, sweep out the house, light the lamps, make all the paths, seat the folks, stay all Sunday till nine o'clock, and do the hard dirty work for the society—for how much—yes, for how much? Why for thirty dollars a year! Whew! what do you say to that, hey? If it ain't raised *I'll* quit. I'll have justice. *I'll* make a fuss too; then what?"

CHAPTER XIII.

DIFFICULT TO SUIT ALL.

THE next two days that followed the sale of the slips, were busy days with the committee. Mr. Street's counting room was full half the time. Messrs. Jones and Wilcox had two or three men with families recently come to work for them, and they wanted slips, "*good slips.*" The Colonel took Mr. Street's. As Mrs. White had *not* secured her husband a seat, it was found necessary to apply for one to the committee, and number sixty-eight was set down to that family. Mr. Street had seventy-four put to his name, but the widow Longsbury and her three daughters saying that they calculated on having that seat if any, Mr. Street gave that up also, and sat in one hundred and one, quite down under the singers. But his wife and family rebelling at this, he made arrangements with the holder of number thirty, near the pulpit, to accommodate a part of his family there.

"Mr. Street," said a gentleman coming in to the office in haste, "how's this, I told you to bid me off a slip at eight dollars, and you've run me up to fifteen."

"True, Sir, but none of the middle aisle slips sold for eight dollars, and I thought you wanted a good seat so I bid you off number forty, fifteen dollars."

"But I can't stand it; its too much. I'd sooner have no slip than pay such an exhorbitant price for it—can't stand it, no how."

"Why, Sir, everybody else pays in the same proportion."

"Can't help that. I'll go to the Methodist Church first. You can buy good slips there for five dollars."

"I am sorry, Sir. Mr. Sweetser what can we do for Mr. Harley; is there a slip that he can take on the wall aisle in exchange for this!"

"Perhaps so, here is ninety-eight, eighty-seven, one hundred and five, six, seven, unsold."

"I'll exchange seventy-two with him," cried out George Dorings, a farmer from the west side."

"What did it cost?"

"Cost! why I paid ten dollars for it."

"I can't stand it, too high, money is hard to get; no, no, give me a wall slip; what are they?"

"Any of those left are four, five, and six dollars."

"Give me then eighty-seven for four-dollars."

"Oh, no Sir, that is six dollars."

"Six dollars! that's too high."

"Does Mr. Harley wish to dispose of number forty, bid off at fifteen dollars?" inquired a lady in a loud sharp voice.

"Yes, madam, I do."

"Well, Sir, put it down to me." So Mrs. Hastings, the lady who kept boarders in the village, secured herself a good slip quite unexpectedly.

Mr. Harley while debating, lost eighty-seven, and was glad at last to take ninety-eight for five dollars.

The committee worked very hard for two or three days to satisfy every one, but there were several who were not pleased, and some said they should leave and go to the other societies. This is always a very frightful remark to committee men, ministers, and timorous society men. They see in it the immediate falling to pieces of the church and society!

On the whole, the society was pleased at the sale. Every thing looked very prosperous, and it was generally conceded that the church must be enlarged in order to accommodate all who wanted slips.

The people were glad that now nothing stood in the way of allowing their Pastor an increase of his salary. His devotion to the people of his charge had secured their unqualified regard, and there were very few indeed who did not desire to make his position, in pecuniary matters, as agreeable as possible.

And it was the joy of Mr. Williams' heart that there were so many "praying" men in his church, who, in times of awakening, as in the stated and regular weekly meetings, could be relied on to help him. There were several brethren in the church who were capable of making a forcible,

intelligent, and awakening address, as rich in thought, and as persuasive, almost, as the Pastor himself.

Some of the brethren, especially Deacon Hartwell, Dr. Alexander, and Mr. Street, were remarkable for their happy and forcible style of exhortation. And in prayer, Deacon Armstrong, Mr. Sweetser, and Esquire Peters were all devout and fervent, causing a general seriousness to rest on every attentive mind present. When the Pastor was unable to attend, these and other brethren would cheerfully take charge of the meeting, and see that nothing was neglected which would give solemnity and interest to it. If, then, there were among us some men of narrow views and questionable piety, we had our full share of good, intelligent, pious, devoted christians, warm-hearted in the service of Christ, helpful to their Pastor and ready to engage in any good word and work.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SOCIETY'S COMMITTEE—THE BELL.

ON Friday evening, Deacon Hartwell, Dr. Alexander, Esquire Peters, Marcus Street, Mr. Sweetser, and Deacon Willard met at my office to consult together about the Society and to see what might be the financial state of things.

After the customary salutations were exchanged the business came on. Esquire Peters remarked; "It requires time, money, patience, judgment and good sense, not to say piety, to manage a Society and Parish like this, and bring everything out right and satisfactorily to all concerned."

"Yes," said Dr. Alexander, "and public men are often paid in hard words for their labors."

Mr. Street said, "We have been very diligent in our exertions to please and accommodate everybody, even to our own sacrifices in some instances, but there are a few who seem to feel uneasy and to think that we might have done better by them."

"Can't please everybody," said the Deacon. "There are some who begin the year grumbling, and end it grumbling."

Some one enquired how much the slips had sold for.

"We now have seven hundred and five dollars," said Mr. Street, "and but five unsold slips."

"Those you must keep for the poor and for strangers," said the deacon.

"But there are families not yet accommodated."

"Can't help that, it wont do to sell off the free seats. The house of God should never be *all* sold and walled up against strangers and the poor. Now there is Rev. Mr. ——'s church in the city, where they say a poor man can't possibly get a seat for one Sabbath, and no poor man thinks of buying a slip there, or of going there to church. I wonder if that is considered by the great head of the church as the fulfillment of his gospel and example,—'freely ye have received, freely give?'"

"What shall we do for those who yet wish to purchase slips?"

"They must pack close."

"Will you set the example in this respect?"

"Will I? to be sure I will. John Smith can sit with me if he desires it."

"Deacon," said the lawyer, "that wont do; if the house is too small, we must either colonize, or build larger."

"We must build on, I believe," he replied, "but that will cost us heavy, and besides that, we want more room, now."

"True; but how much will it cost to enlarge the church?"

"Fifteen hundred dollars, at least."

"Well, I am ready to take hold of it," said the doctor.

"So am I," and "so am I," went round the room. And the further conversation on that topic seemed to lead to the conclusion that there must be a move made in the 'proper manner, to secure the proposed enlargement during the spring and summer.

"Well as we shall have money enough with seven hundred dollars from the slips and three hundred dollars from the subscription list," said the deacon, "I suppose everybody will agree to increase the salary of our minister?"

"He deserves to be well paid," said the doctor.

"You must see that he is contented in that respect or we shall lose him," said the lawyer.

"How so?"

"Oh, good ministers now a days are sought for, and all the towns and cities are increasing very much the salaries of their clergymen."

"The expenses of the times call for it," said Mr. Sweetser.

The amount had been talked of and agreed upon before by the Society. It had been decided in society meeting to increase the salary of the minister one hundred dollars in case the slips were rented for seven hundred dollars, leaving it with the committee of the society to arrange as they should think best. It was accordingly decided in the name of the Parish to write to Mr. Williams and inform him that he might expect one hundred dollars salary in addition to what had been previous allowed him.

During this conversation the door opened and in came Mr. Park, the Sexton. He sat down and warmed himself by the fire a few moments, and listened attentively to these remarks. When a favorable opportunity occurred, he said,

"Mr. Williams is too good a man to wear himself out."

"We hope he is careful of himself and will not lose his strength or health," said one.

"Well, Sir, he is at work day and night. He has an evening meeting, three or four nights in the week, and funerals to attend, and the sick to visit. He earns his money, if I dont. He has just gone down home from a long walk to Cap'n Abram's, who's sick."

"Captain Abram sick?"

"Yes, he's on his last tack, I fear."

"How long has he been so?"

"He's been gitting low a fortnight or three weeks, and he's an old man, d'ye see, who'll stand a poor chance to git up if he once gits down."

"I will go up and see him to-morrow, myself," said the deacon.

"He is a worthy old man," said Dr. Alexander, "I think his present illness is the effect of old age, more than that of any incurable disease."

"And now Mr. Park," said Mr. Street, "you think that the committee must increase *your* pay, somewhat, hey?"

"Sartain, I do."

"Yours!" said the lawyer.

"Mine, Sir."

"How much do you have now?"

"For that matter, Sir, I have thirty dollars from the committee, and what little favors I can git by ringing the bell for funerals and sich like."

"What do you have to do?"

"Well not much, you'll be after thinking, I 'spose. There's the Sunday work, I ring the bell all day, build the fires and keep 'em going, and light the lamps for evening. I leave after everybody else has gone—being you see—the first man at church in the morning, and the last away at night. Then there's the week day work; I have to wind the church clock once a week, sweep out the church frequently, make the fires on extra occasions, and be on hand at nine o'clock every evening to ring the bell."

"Pretty well, pretty well. And you have how much?"

"Thirty dollârs a year."

"Thirty dollars! And how much do you want?"

"I want fifty, Sir."

"Give it to him, by all means," said the lawyer. "Why I wouldn't let my black servant do the work for that."

The Committee agreed to Mr. Park's wishes. He should have fifty dollars for the ensuing year, and all his usual perquisites.

"Thank ye, gentlemen," said he, "and now I'll just step over to the old church and give you the nine o'clock bell."

"There," said he, as he hastily left the door, and went

with a glad heart to his work, "I told you so. I said they should raise me too, and hav'nt they? Yes, they've *done* it. This comes of standing up for your rights." And he turned the key to the church door, and seizing the bell-rope began as usual to ring the bell.

"What in the world ails the old bell?" said the landlord of the Lion, to his customers.

"Faith," said one, "I've been thinking so too."

"Why, she's out of order, somehow," says the landlord.

"What can have happened to the bell," said Mr. Williams to his wife, "it don't sound clear to-night. Listen!"

"Ain't something to pay with the bell?" inquired Esquire Peters, looking up to the other gentleman, who in turn looked up to him, and all listened.

"It sounds odd enough," I answered.

"Listen, now," said the doctor.

"There it goes—'dang.' There is no *ring* to it."

We all rose, and went to the door. The door of the Post Office was open, so was the door of the hotel, and of the stores opposite, and boys were in the street, and men were at the doors, and all listening, and all curious.

But the sexton pulled away, regardless of the dull sounds that struck a kind of dismay into many a heart in the Parish. Suddenly he stopped, and presently a light was seen to flash from window to window, as the faithful sexton pursued his solitary way up into the belfry. He stooped down, took hold of the tongue, and struck it against the bell. A flat, dull, *dang*, was all that answered him. No



THE SEXTON AND HIS BELL.

sonorous, clear vibrations fell on his ear. He held his light close to the sides of the bell, and then he soon traced a long, hideous crack, extending nearly to the yoke.

"Bah!" said he, "I know'd it. I knew something of this sort was to pay. Well, this comes of luck. Jest as my fortin begun better, here goes a *misfortin*. Fifteen years I've rung this bell, and it never sarved me in such a manner afore."

And he sat down the light, and leaned himself on the bell frame, his head bent over, and one hand in his coat pocket, sadly perplexed in his mind, and ruminating strangely.

In the meantime the village boys began to cry out, "She's cracked!"

"The *bell's* cracked!" said the people around the stores.

"The old bell's gin out," said a worthy of the bar-room.

"The bell is cracked," said the post-master.

"The Parish *bell* is done with," said the shop hands at the factories, "it's cracked!"

"Our beautiful bell," said Mrs. Williams, "it is surely broken!"

"Broken!" said Mr. Williams, "imposs—hark!—it *is*, it is broken."

"Well, gentlemen," said the deacon, "*the bell is cracked*; there goes two hundred dollars."

"Yes," said all, "THE BELL IS CRACKED"—and cracked it was!

CHAPTER XV.

VISITING THE SICK.

ON his return home from our evening session, the deacon mentioned to Mrs. Hartwell the illness of Captain Abram. As she in common with most of the Parish, entertained the highest respect for him, the news was painful to her, and she inquired particularly if he was suffering from a sudden attack of disease.

“Not as I can learn;” he replied, “he seems to have reached the period allotted him, and to fail simply as the aged often do—from old age.”

“How long has he been so feeble,” she asked.

“Only a few days; but he grows weaker, constantly, and if it is possible, to-morrow I must see him.”

“I hope you will by all means, and perhaps I can go with you.”

“Do; I shall be very glad of your company. And the family will all be happy to see you.”

The morning came, but Mrs. Hartwell was not able to accompany her husband, and he called on me with an invitation to do so. I looked at the gloomy clouds, and shiv-

ering with the cold, replied, "I should like to go, *but*—" when he anticipating me, observed,

"I am afraid, my dear Sir, you do not stir about enough for your own good. Here are good buffalo robes, and the ride is short. Besides," said he, "Captain Abram is always glad to see us, never more than when he knows that we have put ourselves to some trifling inconvenience. A sailor knows what it is to lie by in a storm to render help." Of course I went.

As we rode along up the village street, the deacon remarked,

"It is always well, if our circumstances will allow it, to visit the sick."

"I know," said I, "that the Saviour resorted to the dwellings of the sick, and consoled them by his words, and relieved them by his power."

"True; and he has informed us, that in the day of judgment it will be remembered of all his disciples, among the other duties which they have performed, that they visited the 'sick.' 'I was *sick*, and in prison, and ye came unto me.' And is our religion not wanting as a divine grace, if it does not lead us to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction?"

"You do not mean that this is in itself religion, nor that it is the absolute proof that we have it?"

"No. But I think that if we are true Christians, we shall see and feel the obligation, and practice accordingly."

"I do so."

"Further," said he, "considerable benefit arises to our selves from performing of this great duty. It is food to the soul. It is a great quickener of gratitude, and is an incentive to prayer. Well does the word of God assure us that it is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting and assign the reason. Yes, Sir, the living *will* lay it to heart. There is much to be learnt of God, much of the worth of probation, much of the importance of religion, the power of divine grace, much of ourselves, in the chamber of the sick."

"It is indeed a privilege," I replied, "and I have never regretted the rule adopted in our church, by which every member of it is laid under obligation to make particular inquiry, during the first week of each month of the year, to ascertain if there are any sick persons in the Parish, and if so, either to go in person and see them, or send another."

"That is the best rule for the daily practice of religion," he replied, "that our church has ever passed. I was at first rather afraid of it, for it seemed to me we should fall into a form of duty at best, if we adopted the course, and of what we did, make a merit. And again, if it was carried out, that we should, perhaps, all meet the same day and hour, or many of us, at the house of some very sick person, and actually kill him with inquiries, exhortations, and prayers."

"Very differently from that, it seems to have turned out, Sir."

"Very. I find that one person at a time—perhaps two persons in a large family—or even neighborhood—usually

go in the name of the whole, by a kind of common consent, and that they who do perform the duty for others, feel under the greater obligation to render a faithful service. And, then, how valuable a measure this, for young Christians. They begin life with right views of duty to their brethren and the world. How inconceivably important, also, in promoting personal acquaintance, and kind, humble, Christian, deportment towards one another."

"How impartial," said I.

"How impartial," said he, "the rich and the poor, faring alike, doing alike."

"It is doing much for the constant spiritual growth of the church," said I.

"Yes, and it is an unspeakable relief to the pastor."

"The greatest possible," said I. "Few persons know the exhausting effects of the pastor's labors of this sort, where they all fall on him."

"They are very severe labors, Sir, not mere pastime."

"It is a relief also to the deacons," said I.

"Quite so, quite so," said he, "and the brethren are not as much afraid of the office as formerly. I was somewhat fearful that in dividing the duty up into so many parcels, and making it the duty of all, that what was no one's duty in particular, might by general custom be totally neglected. But I find it is not so."

As we approached the house of Captain Abram, I could but reflect on the goodness and excellent character of Deacon Hartwell. How consistent is he with his professions!

How cheerful and abundant in labors ! How personally attentive to all the calls of duty ! He is not a time-server ; he is not a sycophant ; he is not mercenary, he is not a mere talker, he is not ostentatious. His virtue is the rare one of doing things because they are right—not because some one else has done them—not because some one else refuses, and he *must* do them. He does not ask, “Is there not some one else more able than I am to do this ?” Nor does he say, “If my neighbors will do this, I will.” Does he send his minister a turkey for his Thanksgiving dinner, he has more in mind his minister’s gratification, than his own thanks therefor. He makes an exhortation in meeting, but it is to see how much good can be done by the truth, not to hear himself praised for speaking well. His prayers are not with bashful blushing modesty as unto men, but are holy reverential pleadings with God. He became a disciple of Christ in early life, under the convictions of sin, seeing his danger, duty, and hope. He has been ever prominent in the church, because willing to *do* his duty, not because of any display of vain glory, or bold assumption of place. He has been a reprover of wickedness, without unmeaning severity. He is a cheerful Christian, without either fanaticism or ecstasies.

He commenced his religious life by visiting the sick and by relieving, as far as in his power, the griefs and trials of the suffering. By his judicious and faithful conversation and advice, as well as by his prayers, he has relieved many a wounded mind. Who can know the amount of good that

he may have accomplished in the course of a long life, devoted to the cause of the Redeemer ! Will not the revelations of the great day show that one such as he on earth, has been as the salt of many generations, as the good seed of the precious harvest, of the earth !

To visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, to cheer the aged, support the weak, to pray over and encourage the dying, are duties that are required of all those who hope for the approbation of their judge at the last.

Captain Abram had been for many years a truthful, humble, patient disciple. True he was more than sixty years old when he united with the church. But he is now at an advanced age, and rapidly, as it is thought, approaching his end. He has had many of the ups and downs—the favors and frowns, of life. His father lived at Gloucester, or anywhere “all along the shore” thereabouts, and was a coaster. Abram often accompanied him in his schooner, and became an expert young sailor. But in a great gale the schooner was wrecked almost in sight of home, and Abram lost his father. He was himself preserved, his father having, with his own hands, lashed him to the mast and covered him from the gale with his own jacket. Before he could secure himself, however, he was struck down and washed overboard. Abram was then fifteen years of age and was able to do much for the comfort and support of his widowed mother. She would seem to have been a pious and humble christian, who, in her afflictions, still experienced the consolations of religion. Abram continued to follow the sea

after the death of his father, his mother being spared to him till he was thirty. He was captain of an English trader from his twenty-fifth year till over thirty, and afterwards repeatedly "doubled the Capes." On the ocean his life was that of a sober, consistent man, without the grace of religion. He accumulated in the East India trade a very respectable fortune and owned a handsome residence in Boston, where after his mother's death, he removed and was married. When about forty years of age, he lost his ship by fire, and himself and crew barely escaped death. Nearly all his property was lost. His house was sold, and he had to begin life again. His excellent character as a master soon secured him another vessel, but she foundered in a gale. He was appointed captain of another, and made several voyages in her, one to Calcutta, one to the Pacific, taking with him to Calcutta his wife and two children. He never regained his fortune, and at sixty, his wife and children urging him to leave the seas, he at last reluctantly consented. His wife soon after became unwell, and in a year from that time was taken from him. His oldest son, who had often accompanied him on his voyages, soon followed her, and in a year or two, one of his daughters. In the meantime his second daughter, Ella, having married and removed to Edgefield, he was induced to follow her, and accept of a home with her. Here he has resided for more than twenty years, having, within that period, followed to the grave Ella's husband and her beautiful baby boy. One son, his youngest, is now upon the seas, and is, at the age

of twenty-two, master of a ship in the Liverpool trade. He has been in the Pacific to Canton, home by Good Hope, and around by Cape Horn. With much of his father's nautical boldness and skill he has also a full measure of the paternal coolness and self-possession in the hour of peril, and more of that *Clipper* idolatry and enterprize which belongs as much to the age as to the man. Enterprising, youthful and scientific, he is withal, moral, grave, intelligent, modest. In the storms he sees some hand behind the clouds, and fancies that he hears there his mother's prayers; and anon his father's "*Steady! all well!*" on the starboard quarter. In his nineteenth year, when mate of the ship —, he lost everything but life in the bay of M—— by fire. The crew were all saved. Once or twice shipwrecked, he yet clings to the dangerous element and gives promise of a career as useful as it is bold and variegated.

His brother William and the widowed Ella take care of the father's old age, rendered cheerful by a hopeful piety enjoyed since the death of his wife. With a little property only, in a quiet, cheerful cottage, and that not out-looking on the sea-waves, Captain Abram has now passed into the circle of years, beyond that of fourscore, and is near the waters of the great, greater, greatest Ocean, where his barque will sail, we trust, in an endless breeze, floating on an eternally swelling tide, into havens and harbors of God's most blessed rest.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED—THE RULING PASSION.

WILLIAM and Ella received us kindly, and gently conducted us to the sick room of their father. We found him cushioned up in a large rocking chair, one hand holding his staff, and the other extended upon the open family Bible that was besides him on a small table. We were surprised to see his large and stout frame so very much reduced, and to witness the nervous action of his limbs, and the pallor of his countenance. But it was a great pleasure to us to feel the intelligent pressure of his hands, to know that he was yet clear in thought, and firm in will as ever. With a smile that we were well accustomed to, he received us and enquired kindly respecting ourselves and families. We expressed our sorrow at his illness, and the hope that he was free from bodily anguish.

"I am ill, I am weak, and daily fainting, my good brethren, but God is very kind to me, and the pain I endure is so slight, that I should not know myself to be ill from it alone."

"That may well be considered a mercy," said the dea-

con, "for it lies quite in the power of God to visit us with great physical suffering."

"Oh, yes, *his* power is infinite. We are but worms of the dust. He could visit my aged frame with keenest sensations of pain, and make me every moment to desire death like Job,—and it would be all right in God to do this. I am a sinner, a great transgressor, unworthy of his goodness, the least expression of it should overwhelm me with gratitude, and lead me forever to praise him. I am dependent on him for my breath every moment, and for my hope continually. May he not do as he will with his own ! Shall he give me an account of his ways ? I rejoice while I tremble at his power !"

"The Lord will do that which is best for us," said the deacon.

"I have often thought so," he answered.

"It is a great relief to my father," said Ella, "to sit as he now does and read his Bible."

"And it is a great comfort to have my two children with me, to help me find what I sometimes most need and desire in it."

"Why, father, we quite as frequently ask you for such help as you us."

"I am not certain, still it is unimportant. My mind is daily refreshed by the reading of this word, which, alas ! too many seem to despise—which to others is denied."

"An inexpressible treasure, Sir," said I, "is the word of

God. What were life to us without it, even the longest life ever enjoyed by man?"

"Yes, Sir, a blank, a waste. Without this chart we don't know the seas we are in, and must of course often suffer shipwreck. I should consider my barque just ready to founder, and all hope to perish, were it not for the Bible."

"And now you can see the straight path to heaven?" asked the deacon.

"Yes! joyful and transporting view. I see it—the same path that Jacob trod, the same that David took, that all the righteous walk in, that Jesus the Redeemer has illuminated afresh. The gospel is precious to me now. It has been to a considerable extent for several years. Yet I regret my neglect of it for fifty years of my life, and that a very responsible, tempted, and dangerous mode of life, peculiarly needing its guidance."

"You seem, father, to realise the presence and support of your Saviour?" inquired Ella.

"I think so, my daughter."

"Have you a love towards all the brethren, such as we often speak of in prayer and conference?" inquired Deacon Hartwell.

"They seem very precious to me, for the sake of the IMAGE they bear."

"And you do not feel afraid, father, of dying?" said again the soft voice of Ella.

"Oh! no my child. Death is to me no spectre of horror, the grave is no terror. The Saviour has slept in it."

"Do you," inquired the deacon, "feel resigned wholly to the will of God—can you freely give up all things—yourself—your children—your all?"

"I hope so—I endeavor to. I would like once more to—to—see—"

"Never mind, father, it may be so yet."

"May it, my child? I fear it may not be."

"He is thinking of my absent brother," said she.

We replied, that we thought it probable.

"Yes," said he, having recovered his self-possession, "if I could once more embrace my son, my youngest, my Benjamin, (*next* to William,) I should, I think, have nothing more to desire on earth for myself."

A tear ran down his cheek, and as he brushed it off, he said, "The will of the Lord be done."

Ella now left the room, and soon after conducted in Mrs. Williams and Elizabeth Burgess. The aged invalid welcomed them warmly.

"Ah!" said he, "I am doubly obliged to you, and to you all, for coming to see me to-day. This is my birth-day. I am to-day eighty-one years of age, thanks be to God." And the tears bedewed his venerable face, and all of us wept.

Elizabeth approached him on his right side, and gently placing her hand on his shoulder, said,

"I give you joy, Captain Abram, that you have lived to see this day."

"My daughter Ella could wish me the same with no

sweeter voice, my dear, and there," said he, as he turned and kissed her, "is the old sailor's blessing."

Elizabeth smiled, soothing him with quiet little messages, and picking the lint from his wrapper, she evidently trembled with some concealed agitation, and soon withdrew to a window. In a moment she returned among us, and seemed as calm and cheerful as before.

We all congratulated our sick friend on his having been brought to see the commencement of another year of his life.

"We have all been taken quite by surprise at the announcement of it," said Mrs. Williams.

"It is 'THE LAST OF EARTH' to me," he answered. And then he continued: "But this mortal must put on immortality, this corruptible put on incorruption. * * * And then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. I find myself comforted by these words, although life is sweet even to the aged. Earth seems but a short world to go through, and still it is of great moment; for we read, 'And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' Great distinction is conferred on us who have this image of the earthy, especially if we have the redeemed features of the Son of God, who has gone into heaven to prepare for us the mansions of glory."

It afforded us all the highest possible pleasure to witness the calmness of this venerable man, so near his end; and to be in *his* sick room reminded *us* of the triplet:—

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven."

To him the night of life was as the dawning of day in the bright east of his new world.

The wind sighed around the cottage. "Ah!" said he, "a storm! May the boy make the 'Hook' in time! My brethren you will pray with me that my faith fail not?"

"It will be quite agreeable to my father," said William, "if you will pray with him, Deacon Hartwell, before you leave."

The Deacon complied with their request, and we all felt that it was good to be there, and to send our thoughts away to the mercy-seat.

"There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads;
A place, than all besides more sweet,
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat."

When this ceremony was finished, William was called out to speak with Mr. Sweetser, who, on passing, inquired how the Captain had passed the night, and offered to watch with him the next night if desired.

The ladies began to take their leave—we were all about rising to depart, when the sound of wheels driven rapidly to the door, arrested our movements and attention. The next moment a pleasant looking young man leaped from the carriage, and before any one could stop him, the sailor

"Boy" of the dying Captain was pressing his father's heart to his.

"*Kris!*" faltered the veteran through his tears.

"*Father!*" said the son.

We were overcome with the scene. I thought Elizabeth, who trembled like a leaf, would sink to the floor. She seemed to me also unnaturally pale and excited. We had all seen the young man repeatedly, for he oft came and passed a day or two with his father when his vessel was in port, and recovering from the emotion were waiting to greet him, when the father looking up with a smile of love on his face, and with what seemed to us, the most perfect composure as he held his son a little away from him—said to him,

"And what for a run had ye, now?"

"Good, Sir."

"And the ship?"

"Behaved well, Sir."

"How long a run?"

"We were eighteen days, Sir, from light to light; left the channel in a gale; had westerly winds, some rough water most the passage; weathered a fierce gale we had in latitude $42^{\circ} 26'$, longitude $50^{\circ} 35'$; made the Hook yesterday morning at two, dock at ten; passed in ahead of the Arrow, two days start of us at port."

"Christopher!" exclaimed the excited Captain, "its a rough world ye sail through, seek the great Pilot while he can be found. Its good, my son, to *die* ashore, good to

have your *grave* among your kindred, where it can be found. But Kris, I would give, if I had it, a continent of shore only to have stood with ye at the helm of the 'George' in the gale you mention !"

"Ah! Father, father," cried the son, trembling from head to foot, and shading his brow with his hand, though struggling to retain his composure, at least to avoid losing all self-command. "Father," he cried, "and truly I would have given another to have had you, but father, you are near—near to—to—"

"—PORT, my son ; sailing large ; I've weathered many a gale, and have come near my last anchorage."

"And this," thought I, and thought we all as our eyes met, and the last uttered desire of the old sailor was yet ringing in our ears and producing a common sensation in our hearts. "This is none other than—

"——— the ruling passion,
Strong in death ——"

CHAPTER XVII.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES—COLLECTIONS.

THE cracking of the bell was a very serious mishap to the Society, and it had an immediate disheartening effect. However, after a little time had been spent in bewailing the circumstance, the Parish sat about the work of taking down the bell and sending it away to be recast. Mr. Williams generously came forward and expressed a willingness to relinquish the proposed addition to his salary for that year, as this was an unusual and unlooked for disaster.

"No, no, no!" said everybody; "keep it, there'll be some other unexpected trouble next year; keep it, the Society are able to meet their expenses."

Mr. Park, the Sexton, said he "'sposed he should be obliged to throw off ten dollars from his salary, any how." The committee did not require him to do even that.

Two hundred dollars being the lowest sum that the recasting of the bell and the incidental expenses would amount to, a committee was raised who went all over the Parish with a subscription paper and collected it.

Notwithstanding these extra charges, the collections in

behalf of the benevolent societies went on as usual. The amount that was raised for the Bible Society was larger than it had been for two years past. The appeal of the American Board for Foreign Missions was promptly met, over two hundred dollars being contributed. (I generally call this Society the "*Foreign Missionary Society*," for though it ought not so to be, there are a great many in our Parish who do not know what is meant by the "*American Board*." One very excellent woman in our Parish told another to whom she was earnestly endeavoring to impart information on the subject, that the "*American Board*" was only the name given to the staging or platform on which the Foreign Missionary Society did its public business. She said that it was purely national, and the Society used "*American*" instead of other "boards." And a good many others of our Parish, if they don't commit so gross a blunder as this, do not know what is meant by the phrase, "*American Board*." They, however, understand perfectly well what is meant by "*Foreign Missions*." When I collect money for the "*Board*," therefore, I do it in the name of "*Foreign Missions*," and everybody understands me. Our minister used to give out notices of the collections for the "*American Board*." He now says only this, "on the next Sabbath the Rev. Mr. A. B—— will preach to us on the subject of Foreign Missions," and he is perfectly well understood.) This money was raised by appointing solicitors who went over the whole Parish and made application personally to every member of the

church and society. We were now to make an annual effort in behalf of the American Home Missionary Society. The claims of this interesting branch of benevolence are highly regarded by most persons among us. The feeling had been rising for two or three years, that we must do more for our own country, if no less for the world. On the Sabbath next following the sale of the slips and the disaster to the bell, a very interesting and a deeply affecting sermon was preached to us by the Rev. Mr. Belnap, on the sufferings of home missionaries, and the duty of the church to relieve them. He, in the course of his remarks, observed that the sufferings of home missionaries in respect of the comforts of a convenient and well secured house, whether it were a cabin or a framed dwelling; the conveniences of congregations near at hand to preach to; the supply of necessary food and clothing; the absolute want of money, and the many disheartening circumstances from the unfixed and rude state of society in the frontier settlements, could never be so published and made known to the churches and the world as to give a full and faithful portraiture of them; "they must be *experienced* to be understood." And if the accounts which were written by the missionaries themselves could be all published, and then read even with beating hearts and streaming eyes, "yet would it be impossible" said he, "to feel or to know but a small moiety of those bitter trials that are experienced by your missionaries in the far-off American wilderness." He was "glad to learn that a little book published by the

American Sunday School Union, entitled *The Prairie Missionary*, had been so generally read among the people." Could he "but be sure that all had read it, he would be willing to say no more, they must be already enlisted in the cause of these suffering missionaries. 'They live' said he, "many of them, neglected, frequently despised and ridiculed, simply because they preach the gospel of Christ. They are in want of a tight cabin, of food, of raiment, of friends. They are embarrassed often with little, not unfrequently with large debts. They are sick, but who shall help them? They are far from their own friends, they know not any who are willing and able to relieve them, yet they cannot resign the glorious work of preaching the gospel of Christ." He mentioned several cases of personal suffering, and yet of devotion to the cause, and so interested his audience that tears flowed freely around the church. He then entreated them, as they valued beyond all price their own quiet homes, and their own gospel privileges, to open wide their hearts towards God's suffering and toiling ones afar off. He plainly represented the duty of denying ourselves for the good of others, and made seem of small worth indeed the objects and pursuits of men, that tend only to selfish gratification.

The pastor added to these remarks a short and earnest exhortation, and then gave out the names of the persons in the society, ladies and gentlemen, who would call on the Parish for contributions. Never before was there gathered so large a sum for this cause in our Parish. It was over

one hundred and ninety dollars. The solicitors were very faithful and diligent. It took a great deal of their time, and Mr. and Mrs. Williams both offered to assist them, and said that it was truly a great sacrifice of time, as well as a great labor, to collect the money. But the ladies and gentlemen were very earnest in their work.

"We can't suffer as much as our poor missionaries do," said they, "even though we were to labor very hard."

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto ME," replied Mr. Williams, in the language of the Redeemer of men.

Along with these things, it was always agreeable to me to notice how much engaged the best part of the Parish seemed to be in the Sabbath-School. Mr. Williams and his wife took a deep interest in this work themselves. Mrs. Williams assisted materially in arranging the classes, and in inducing persons to connect themselves with the Bible classes; also, in the arrangement and management of the library. Her husband frequently tarried after service, and prayed, or addressed the children. There were sometimes thirty or forty ladies and gentlemen engaged as teachers. They held a weekly teachers' meeting for their own improvement. They procured books and newspapers for the school. They gathered in the poor and idle children of the place, and created a great interest in the society in favor of this most useful branch of religion.

While the existence of such an institution in the society, and within, as it were, the embrace of the church, could not

otherwise than greatly increase the care and solicitude of the pastor, it must be confessed that the activity and self-denial and actual labor of so many worthy and talented persons in the society, co-operating zealously with her in the objects of it, greatly relieved him of that which might otherwise have been too great a burden. It was delightful to witness the love of the children for their teachers, and the love and respect, and gratitude of all towards the pastor. This was ever to me a beautiful and truthful representation of a sheep-fold, where the tender lambs were watched over by careful shepherds.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PRIVATE JOURNAL—WEST EDGEFIELD.

February.—My heart is often pained when I think of the poor church at West Edgefield. While we are in affluence and in much enjoyment, though intensely occupied, they are in circumstances of great depression. Their numbers are few, their young men all leave them, and go down into the factory villages or to the city, and they have hard work to pay their minister the small salary they promised him. He is a very worthy man, although he is not so good to manage and husband his affairs as many others are. Neither is he a very interesting preacher, which is a pity, for he is a very finished writer, and sermonizer. He is considerably in debt, and his society seem unable to relieve him of it. He is of course much embarrassed by these circumstances, and they no less so. As far as I can learn the facts, both pastor and people entertain a regard for each other, and such an one as is consistent with their mutual dependence and helplessness, and it would not contribute at all to relieve their embarrassments to dissolve the relation. We have promised, therefore, to help them what we can, and

also have advised them to continue along as they can, putting their whole trust in God. We are now making up a contribution of one hundred dollars for them, and hope it will tend to relieve their present necessities. The church at West Edgefield ought to be sustained. It is one of the oldest churches in the State, and it has been the mother church of several in this vicinity. Many and many are they who have taken letters from her, and gone to other churches. Eminent ministers have resided and officiated there. A large number of young theologians have studied there. Many intelligent men of business in the world, were educated in its ancient-looking academy. It is a quiet, rural town; one of beauteous scenery, with its ever-varying landscapes, its hill and dale, its winding streams, its solitary walks, its sunlit headlands; and yet, it is no place of BUSINESS! Alas! alas! All the good, and all the beautiful and peaceful in nature, must now a days be sacrificed to the idea of "BUSINESS!" No railroad goes there. No workshops eject steam there, no heavily loaded trucks drawn by jaded, wheezing horses, rumble through its streets. The old four-horse coach, also, is laid aside. A post-boy in a wagon brings the mail; the travel is now all up the vallies by rail roads. Yes, I grant, that now, as it is likely, the West Edgefield Parish will barely hold its own, and that, too, with considerable help from abroad. But who ever saw a more quiet and beautiful little village. Here is a wide common, and at one corner on the south, is the quaint little academy, with its miniature steeple and bell, all under

the spreading arms of venerable elms. And on the same side of the common is the old-fashioned, but good-looking church, and close by it a white cottage, and further along a red one. And on the opposite side of the green is the demure looking Parsonage, with its gambrel roof, and stone door-step and walk, its picket fence around the yard, its large red barn, its old-fashioned well-swoop and bucket. There are green blinds on the windows of the house, and the white chimneys are topped out with black; and smoke from the rock maple, or hickory fire is rolling from out them. Tall trees, planted a century ago, overtop the edifice, and in summer give the grounds a delightful coolness and fragrance. Just a little up the way is the store and post-office, and then the hotel, with its piazza; and far up the street, is the square old dwelling of the deacon.

* * * * *

But alas! for West Edgefield, I fear it is going down.

March 1st.—Captain Abram is dead! The aged, devotedly pious one, who never, when able to be abroad, deserted the sanctuary, has gone from this, to a better world. How many during the past year, have left us, some prepared, we hope, for their great change, but others, the majority we fear, taken away in their wickedness! We have closed the aged disciple's eyes in their last sleep, and earth has lost one more of her humble and contrite ones.

CHAPTER XIX.

JOURNAL RESUMED—A SPLIT.

MARCH 10th.—We are again favored with the cheerful ringing of our church bell. It has been re-cast, returned, and elevated. The Sexton is in fine spirits, and vows it sounds better than the old one. And everybody seems to greet its return with unaffected pleasure. Last Monday, Angeline Hartwell, Evelina Street, Mary Peters, and Harriet Jones, accompanied by three or four young gentlemen, and escorted by the Sexton, went up into the belfry and crowned the bell with a beautiful wreath of evergreen. A great many have been there since to see it.

At last it has been decided by the Society, in a special meeting called for the purpose, to enlarge and improve the church at an expense of fifteen hundred dollars, a committee of five has been appointed, who have instructions to see the work commenced as early as practicable. The whole house is to be painted as well on the outside as the inside, a great many improvements are spoken of, but the committee will do as they think best, as far as the general plan is concerned.

I am sorry that Colonel Arrs is so dissatisfied, and with him Mr. Harley. The Colonel and Deacon Hartwell had quite a dispute at the Society's meeting. The Colonel said the old house was good enough and large enough; that the Society was'nt growing; that the "Hollow" would soon run away from us, and we had better look well to ourselves before launching out into more expenses.

The deacon replied severely. He thought a man who could'nt be satisfied unless he had one of the best slips in the church, even though he took it away from somebody else, ought to see the importance of a larger house. And as to the "Hollow" running away with the old town and Society, he thought that not all who were present would ever live to see that day.

The Colonel said in reply, that a good many in the place were disposed to form another society. For his own part he had been born and educated an Episcopalian, but he had conformed to the habits of the people here and joined with them. He made no secret of his preferences, nor of his intentions. When able, he would, God helping him, try to found such a church here. He said there were others in the Society disposed, though different from himself, to a change, either to a Unitarian, or a Universalist order, and he thought in time, they would declare off and go together.

The deacon was surprised at such a public speech and avowal, and at such a time. He trusted it was not made for effect merely, and to discourage the people from effort.

"No," said the Colonel, "the people can do as they please, I've given all I shall," and so saying, followed by Mr. Harley and two other persons, he left the house.

For a short time there was an uncomfortable silence, and then a violent sort of sensation and reaction, in the meeting. The deacon rose and said that the cause of religion was the cause of God, and the duty of supporting it by his children was as imperative in foul weather as in fair. "For my own part," said he, "I have reason to apologize to the Society if I have betrayed an unchristian spirit in this affair or have been unnecessarily severe. But I have long known his secret purpose and have been acquainted with his private management, and it has been my determination to unmask him on the first favorable occasion. I think that we know the real strength of the Society, and that we are as able to go forward with the help only of real and avowed friends, as with the concurrence of faithless and plotting enemies."

There was a feeling of despondency on some minds after this split in our ranks occurred, though all of us justified the deacon and none were present to sympathize with the other party. But at length, as the whole matter was talked up, the spirits of all seemed to revive, and they unanimously voted that the repairs and the improvements should be made.

When the meeting adjourned, and the people left, the Colonel was seen in front of the Hotel with a cigar in his mouth, flourishing his silver headed cane, and with con-

siderable swell and swagger addressing a company of ten or twelve persons who had gathered around him. It was evident that he was stirring them up to the position of independency of the "old Society," to the sticking point of "come-outers." The Colonel is not one of our wealthiest men, although he has considerable property, but he is a blustering important personage, and is good to lead on a movement where daring and impudence are wanted more than reason and piety.

March 11.—Poor Mr. Williams! He is terribly cut down by the events of yesterday. He will not allow any other cause for the Colonel's dissatisfaction and that of others, but his own failure of duty, or incapacity to interest and profit them. But I trust his good sense and the calm and cogent reasonings of Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Hillhouse, and Mrs. Street, together with our own full explanations will have their effect, and quiet him. I have never seen him so deeply moved. He walked the room, and sighed bitterly several times. "Yes," said he, "it has come upon me at last. I have vainly hoped that all was well, but alas! in a moment the cup of human confidence is dashed from my lips; I must drink the bitter cup of mortification and sorrow."

"Sir," said Mrs. Street, "if this affliction is from the Lord, it is well; if it is for you, it is also for us. Have we received good at the hands of the Lord, and shall we reject the evil?"

"Dear madam, I thank you, I respect you, I believe you.

Yes, all of you I love—even *those* men do I love, but consider now their probable fate. They have separated themselves from us, and from our influence, from our prayers and sermons, and companionship, and will, I fear, make shipwreck of hope and faith.”

We all endeavored to confine his mind to this peculiarly appropriate view of the case, and then to lead him to trust the matter with God ; but I have never seen him so violently agitated. He wept aloud. We gave him all the advice in our power, and when we parted, he accompanied us to the door, and gave us, in a calmer manner, his promise or assurance that we should find him in the morning in a measure relieved.

March 12th.—Mr. Williams passed much of the last night in prayer ! He at length sought his pillow, and arose at a late hour. He sat down with a face perfectly peaceful and happy, to eat with his family, and greeted them as usual with a kiss. “All is well,” said he, “the will of the Lord be done. This is heaven’s work. I see it, I know it. It is appointed for our own good.” He afterwards walked abroad as usual, and then shut himself up in his study, till weary with his work there, he ate a slight dinner, and went over into the west part of the Parish. Many other hearts ache over this matter, as well as the pastor’s. Many feel the occasion to be one that should lead them to pray more fervently than ever for the presence and direction of the Holy Spirit. Many now begin to feel distressed at the thought of severing from one and another

with whom they have hitherto gone hand in hand, and wish it were possible that the difficulties might be healed. Attempts will, I doubt not, be made with this in view.

March 13th.—An interview has taken place between Colonel A. and Mr. Williams. It, however, ended in nothing satisfactory on the main question, but the Colonel positively affirmed that no man on earth, not Deacon Hartwell himself, could entertain a higher personal respect for the pastor than he did. He even swore, that if the *Bishop* himself were to forbid him, he should love occasionally to hear him preach. The Colonel is, after all, a man of kind feelings. He is often provoking, but as frequently does that which is conciliating. He is thoughtless and swaggering, but he is also open and generous. Personally, he knows but little of religion, but trusts the more to his Priest. He sees the *supposed* necessity of some religious system, and when he chooses for himself, elects the one in which he was born. He pays for preaching as for a good dinner, and reverences the sanctuary as he would a king's palace. He would draw his sword as valiantly in the church to defend his priest, as on the field of battle to save his cannon, or his general. He is nothing to lose, *and yet we are sorry that he has gone.*

CHAPTER XX.

THE CHURCH TO BE ENLARGED.

THE society immediately and warmly entered into the projected improvement of the church. They had provided for raising the salary, and had met all the other regular and incidental expenses of the Parish,—now it became necessary to secure the money requisite for this new expense. After a great variety of methods were proposed, it was at length determined to assess every member of the Society his or her due proportion of the cost, according to the valuation of each one in the grand list of the town. Personal application was made to every individual, to secure his consent to this course. But it was no easy matter to carry it. Some were unwilling to pay their full proportion, because they did not need the repairs themselves. Others because it was better, if so much was to be expended, to add a little more, and build a *new* house. And a good many said that the members of the *society*, ought not to pay as much for an object of this sort, as the *church* members, they being more immediately interested in the worship of God, and in religious matters generally. There were others who present-

ed various excuses, such as "expensive families," "hard times," "unequal taxation of the rich and the poor." But these were all induced to waive their objections, and consent to the assessment. There was another party, rather increased by this proposal and vote, of which Colonel Arrs stood at the head, who refused to have anything to do with it, and who even threatened to bring a suit against the society for a thousand dollars, more or less, their own interest in the society's funds. But it was argued against this, that they had not, in time to avoid the assessment, thrown up their certificates of membership, and whatever claim they might have on the society for their property in the common fund, they were holden by a major vote of the society to all its previous expenses. This irritated some. They declared that they would not be compelled to pay a dollar.

The society felt alarmed at this state of things. So did Mr. Williams. His judgment, for a young man, was very ripe, and it was frequently sought. He advised to ascertain, precisely, the state of every man's difficulty, and make every possible exertion to satisfy him, without offending any with saying, "You are *obliged* to submit to the majority." "This," said he, "always irritates an American." We all knew what he referred to, and clearly saw an apprehension in his mind that our case was becoming about as complicated as that of the British Parliament and the American Colonies!

By a great amount of forbearance and conciliatory action, as well as by much personal solicitation, everything

was finally arranged as follows. Colonel Arrs, Mr. Harley and Mr. Ruggles refused the assessment, for they said they had left the Society in time. They also claimed an undivided interest in the Society funds, but they did not care now to press it. There were two other persons who consented to the assessment, but threw in their certificates of membership; the remainder were all friendly.

This work caused the Society an untold amount of effort and anxiety. Some of the old men said we were all going to pieces, and it was a rebuke of pride. They said we were so proud of our minister that we "could'nt hear anybody else preach, and for fear he would not live easy enough, had given him another hundred dollars, when he already laid up money." *Still the old men wanted the Society to grow, and everybody to have a slip.* Because of these threatening appearances, several ladies of the church held meetings by themselves, and I doubt not earnestly prayed that we might be saved from ruin.

The younger portion of the Society, both men and women, who were inspired with the prevalent notion of "progress" and "destiny," then so much spoken of in public, seemed not to care a fig for these storms, or "scare crows" as they termed them, and they pushed matters along, how much so ever many held back. Neither was deacon Hartwell concerned, nor Doctor Alexander, nor Marcus Street, nor Esquire Peters, neither was I. It was a foregone conclusion that we should succeed. It was hardly, and yet it was, a question of time.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOURNAL AGAIN—THE “DISPUTING TERRITORY” IN THE PARISH.

MARCH 20.—Of all the trials that society suffers, I know of none so agitating to the nerves, and so desperate to manage, as those petty disturbances between individuals of the Parish, which arise from feelings of wounded vanity and fancied neglect. There is one part of our parish which is called the “Disputing Territory,” because the families there, are, several of them, continually at loggerheads. Their difficulties have, several times, been partially healed and smoothed over like “the hurt of the daughter of my people,” but they have as oft broken out again, as fire smothered, and raged with no less violence than at first. The families in that quarter have, strange as it may seem, intermarried a good deal, and when even the church attempts to discipline one of the disputants, all the rest rise in his defence. They hate one another, but they wish nobody else to fight for them, or to interfere in their quarrels. When the Society sends a pacificator among them, if he enters one house before another, he is received by the rest with the suspicion that he has been already prejudiced by

stopping where he did. (So do men who are themselves in error, and accustomed to a certain course of conduct that agrees with it, readily conceive that all other men are like them, to whom they are opposed !)

These disputes belong to no one period of the Society's history. Perhaps it is in the very air of the neighborhood that they exist, for it must be owned, that a doleful sort of aspect reigns in the vicinity. The houses look desolate ; the children in the yards seem suspicious ; the creatures and fowls look uneasy ; the barns and all the out-buildings seem neglected ; there are few *new* things among them ; the old bridges over the roads are propped up and retained ; the old trees are left to grow ragged ; old wagons and carts with broken axles, felloes, and tires, are scattered here and there ; the gate at the front door is unhinged and the walk untrodden ; the dog is a sneaking *cur*. Selfishness seems to have made a home among them, for what is fat and comely among the beasts, is only reckoned by its value in the market. Some of these persons are not wanting in intelligence and wealth, but their wealth seems less the older they grow, and their intelligence is sadly counterbalanced by their perversion of truth in social practices. They live to eat up one another, and the aliment is too innutritious of itself, even if taken in large quantities, to grow upon, and they are *all* so lean, that the metaphysical certainty remains, that they can *never* of one another, eat a satiety.

These quarrels have come down from a long distance. Our young people know nothing of their origin. It is,

however, credibly reported that they began soon after the Parish was formed, and commenced in the refusal of one man to allow his neighbor's geese to swim in the same pond with his own, although it was quite questionable whether the pond was his or the others. The original disputants bequeathed their grievances to their own families and they entailed them in their turn on theirs'. They were easily kept alive. The children pricked each other at school, and told fibs about one another if delinquent, and put snow balls into each others' dinner baskets at recess. And the older boys sprung each others' traps and snares set for rabbits and squirrels, and even, now and then, barked a young favorite tree in an orchard. Still, occasionally, some pretty girl in one family would win the heart of a lad in another, and thus, as the years went by, and the settlement increased, the difficulties grew more entangled as the cords of relationship tightened. The old men answered one another surlily, though they seldom came to blows, and would occasionally do something for each other that looked like a leaning to kindness, or not a total depravity over and above their natural depravity. The women, in their respective circles, kept up a very great fire of scandalous talk, and while "nothing was too mean for one to do," "nothing was too great for another to suffer." The party talking, was ever the sufferer, the party talked about, the offender. At times there have been known to be present of an afternoon or evening, at some common friend's, individuals from this Territory, who though lively talkers in general, never

addressed each other. They never knew one another on the highway. If one enquired anything of either family about the other, there was a total ignorance of them, whether sick or well, in poverty or riches. But they mutually hated and hectored one another, and when nobody was to be served at all by their answers but themselves, (or injured but the absent ones,) they knew enough about them to fill a Justice's record.

So much for them. They still go on as they did twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years ago. Even though the original cause of the war be not remembered, yet invention is never at fault. "You did" or "you didn't," keep the families in the Disputing Territory just as belligerent as at the first. The Society has ever mourned over these things; but it has been in vain that every imaginable and reasonable proceeding has been instituted to put an end to such a deplorable state of things, both in the church and society. At length we have all come to regard it appointed as one of our "thorns in the flesh."

But would you know how we lost the family of the Hinghams from the society? It was in this manner. They, by the way, were quite decent, though they were not remarkably influential persons. Mr. H. was a clever sort of a man, inoffensive, industrious, and reflective. Mrs. H. was a lively, frank, homelike woman. The children were fond of their parents. But, alas! Mr. and Mrs. H. were not rich, and they could not buy a twenty dollar slip. They had pride enough to sit next to the deacon, or the doctor, or

the Colonel, but not money enough. So they took it hard of every body that they were not treated better, and by-and-bye, with many complaints, fell off from attendance at church. Our good people tried to smooth the hill of difficulty for them, but they seemed disposed to complain, and continue still dissatisfied. One and another said at length, "We shall lose the Hinghams." "Lose the Hinghams!" exclaimed others. "The Hinghams going to quit?" inquired A, B, and C. "What can be done to save the Hinghams?" inquired the pastor. But nothing could save them. Their fat, beautiful boy Eddie was taken sick and died. All our people in the vicinity went and offered their attentions to the family, but as they were a little behind the people of the other society, and our pastor and his lady did not visit them till the afternoon, when the pastor and lady of the other society called in the morning before breakfast, and tarried till twelve at noon, the Hinghams "were lost to us." Especially as the ladies of the other sewing society sent the pastor's lady, and the two eminent Directressess of the society, in a covered carriage, with a card of invitation to Mrs. Hingham, to come and meet with them—and directly after, Mr. Hingham was informed, officially, that if he and his family found it convenient and pleasant to attend their church, he should enjoy its privileges gratuitously. "Are the Hinghams lost?" The Hinghams *are* lost.

It has often cost us the favor of some one or two persons of this sort, whenever we have tried hard to please them, unless we totally abandoned all the usually recognized lines

of society, and marched them, (cost what it might,) right up towards the pulpit, among the rich and talented and influential, who have themselves, in fact, not unfrequently, been obliged to go down into the back slips, to accommodate them. But pure oil burns as brightly in the dark as in the light. These uneasy spirits should remember, that a forced elevation always meets with its real and necessary depression. Once out of the church, the truly influential citizen or Christian assumes again his own position, and the intruder *his*.

I know not how many cases of complaint to the church for petty misdeameanors, have in times past occurred, and how often it has been shown that personal prejudice, envy, or jealousy, lay at the bottom of the whole. There were formerly more of these cases than there are at present. And yet the sentinels on duty in the "disputing territory," report no cause for relaxing in *their* vigilance! Aside from these, our church and Parish have been remarkable for their order, peace, and kindness to one another. Must there not be "tares with the wheat" till the harvest come? Then may we bear with patience the presence and baleful influence of these noxious weeds in our own goodly wheat fields. In due time they will be taken from us, and gathered only to the flames.

CHAPTER XXII.

JOURNAL OF MARCH 30TH—FIRE!

ALAS! who will not pity us now? A blow has indeed smitten us that we have never before felt. Is it the rod of His anger, or voice of correction? We bow in the dust, we pray for submission. The ways of the Lord are past finding out, and yet he doth not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men. Oh! let us gather assurance from this promise of the Scripture, and may we, though he slay us, still trust in Him.

How short-sighted is man, and how suddenly may all his best plans come to naught! This has been especially proved to-day. The morning sun arose unclouded; the air was still, though frosty, the ground, in part, free from snow and ice, and we began to hail the arrival of spring with the out-burstings of heartfelt joy. Little did we think that the morning bell from the old time-honored sanctuary, which sent forth its cheering sounds over the Parish at nine o'clock, was then ringing out the last of its regular and measured tones, from the tower where its home has so long been. But such is the most sad—nay, awful fact. “Our

holy and our beautiful HOUSE, where our fathers praised Thee, is burnt up with fire ; and all our pleasant things are laid waste."

We are a people whom the Lord has seen it best to afflict. Oh ! that *this* chastening may do us good, to the preventing, if possible, of one still more direful.

It was near the hour of morning service, when my wife rushed into the parlor, where, by the fire, I was quietly reading my Bible, and cried out, "My dear ! what is the meaning of this sudden and violent ringing of the bell ? And—dear me ! I do believe there is smoke rising from the very roof of the church." I threw off my spectacles, and cried "FIRE ! FIRE ! FIRE !" as I got up from the rocker and made towards the door. My three boys, who were up stairs, sprang to their feet at these vociferations, and came thrashing down the stairs. They supposed *we* were on fire. Their mother, breathless with alarm, threw open the door, and pointed to the church, towards which crowds were now hastening. They immediately seized our buckets, and ran there along with the crowd. I arrived soon after them. Indeed it was too true that the church was on fire, and the people as they gathered around it, a few rushing in, hardly seemed to know what course to follow. Besides it was SUNDAY ! and it was the hour for morning service, a still, solemn, and holy hour : it seemed almost a profanation to cry "*Fire ! fire !*" to make a noise and disturbance, to work and sweat as one would do on a week day. The fire had caught in a bad place, away up in the roof, from the stove

pipe, which, after passing from the porch along the aisles, went out above. And there, up so high that from below no water could be thrown to it, and raging, with densest volumes of smoke along the dark passage between the roof and ceiling, which rushed out towards the belfry, and by every crevice in the roof and walls, was the cracking, flaming, hideous fire ! And now a great throng of men, women, and children, gathered around the building, all thunderstruck, as it were, and overpowered with the direful scene.

At this juncture, when everything was so eminently perilous, and no one knew what to do, a large and strong man with great strides, flourishing a silver-headed cane over his head and pointing one this way and another that, rushed boldly through the crowd, and dashing his drab overcoat on the earth, cried out in a voice of thunder, "Bring the tall ladder to the back side of the church from the Academy, immediately !" More than twenty men rushed away to execute this order. "Now men and women too," said he, "form a line here to the great swamp spring in the rear," and he pushed this one and that one with his cane, who were too much amazed to move quickly, and planting his broad shoulder with a spring against the tall broad fence of the church, he laid it in a second of time flat on the ground. The people rushed through the opening, and by the time the ladder came, water was passing rapidly in buckets and pails along the lines to where the ladder was raised to the roof. Several men rushed up the ladder and went as near the fire as prudent and dashed on the water as it came up.

Who was this man that had the whole company so completely under his command and was acting with so much judgment and coolness? It was none other than Colonel Arrs! And while the previous things were going on, he was directing others. "Ho! here," he cried to a group, "rush into the church, above and below, secure all the books; put down those windows!" cried he with the voice of a lion, "take off the blinds on the outside, and the last thing done let it be to save the windows. Would you open a draft for the flames?" Then everybody was set to work who could be spared, to withdraw the carpets, cushions and stools. Mr. Williams rushed into the room now filled with smoke, the fire beginning to appear through the ceiling in several places, and carrying all before it. He had the forethought to direct the deacon to take away the rich communion service from the closet, and the mahogany table and chairs. He himself carried away the large bible containing sundry records of value on its ancient pages.

While these things were going forward, Colonel Arrs, who was in every place at once, directing this, and saving that, had not forgotten the bell. But it was dangerous to attempt saving it. The smoke rolled up into the steeple from the opened mouth of the garret vault, and the fire was every moment approaching the stairs. But already had the design to save the bell been formed in his mind, and as soon as formed commenced. "Follow me here, a dozen of the stoutest of ye; on! on!" cried he, leaping up the stairs two or three at once, and carrying with him an axe which

he had wrenched from the hand of a man more thoughtful than many others. They obeyed him, no one flinched. They were all stout and true-hearted men. Among them was my oldest son, Archibald, who is six feet in height, and strong and courageous in proportion. They rushed up into the smoke and fire. But the flames drove them back. "What would you do, Colonel Arrs?" cried the stentorian voice of Deacon Hartwell from below; "you will all perish, come down!" "No!" cried he, "who wants a bell like this to be destroyed by these ugly flames. No! we'll pitch the bell from the window, and then if it breaks it will do to make another. We will at least save the temper." But the smoke was terrible to endure. Soon a sort of crash, and a report like the escaping of pent-up steam, reached them, and the smoke sensibly decreased. A shout from the workmen outside followed. "Ha!" said some one, "they are getting it under."

"Getting it under, no they aint! *now* or never; up with you *boys*!" shouted the colonel, "the fire has made a large hole through the roof, and smoke and flame go the same way!" But what a scene of tumult was now seen below! Wives were screaming to their husbands to descend. Parents were weeping for a child exposed, friends and neighbors rushed up part way to the galleries, and cried to the party above to give up their mad and useless project. "Go back! clear the way from the door, be quiet, and trust in God!" cried the colonel, leading his men by a few direct bounds into the bell loft. Nothing daunted by the hissing

flames that now swept over the whole surface of the roof, and would, in five minutes, wrap their forked tongues around the steeple, he dashed out the green window blind with a blow of the axe, shouting, "Away there below, away, for your lives. Now grasp the bell, *all hands!* at the same time, you Mr. Holmes," (who helped to hang the bell,) "cut down the whole tackling." Holmes seized the axe, one blow with his great strength, in the right place, opened the wheel and the severed rope fell through into the porch. A few heavy and well-directed blows following, the bell hung in the hands of nearly a dozen broad-shouldered men, each of whom could toss a two-hundred pound weight over a wall. "Away from below, away!" thundered the voice of Colonel Arrs. "All clear! all clear!" shouted a hundred voices. The next instant a huge black mass fell through the dense columns of smoke that were now rolling around the steeple, and with a single vibration that caused every ear that heard it to tremble, the new and beautiful bell that had been so lately raised into its lofty home, and more recently covered with laurel, fell, a weight of twelve hundred pounds, on the hard granite steps of the church, and was dashed to pieces. A shout of triumph (even though it was the Sabbath) filled the air; yet even before it rose, the colonel cried, "now men, save yourselves!" From the window he cried, "*Bear away the pieces!*" and then, through fire and smoke, they fought their way to the porch. The colonel came down bearing in his

arms the door of the belfry, which he had wrenched off in his descent.

Men were now scattered over the building in all directions, where safety would allow of it, and the windows and blinds were, for the greater part, secured. The flames burnt on. Soon the whole house was enveloped in them. It was an exciting moment when they ran up to the top of the steeple and stretched their hungry necks and forked tongues into the air above. It was a mournful scene indeed. How many looked on and wept. How many wrung their hands in bitterness. How many mothers held their children in their arms and tried to make them as conscious of the awful catastrophe as themselves, while they sought, moreover, to comfort them by saying, "God will build us *another* house my dears!"

In less than an hour the whole church fell in, a mass of burning and smouldering rubbish. Around it a gaping crowd collected all day. When the frame fell in the colonel put on his drab overcoat, wiped away the smoke and perspiration from his face, and finding his cigar case in one of his pockets, he walked straight to a burning brand near by, and lighting his cigar soon enveloped his great face with the curling smoke.

"Now, Deacon Hartwell!" said he, walking up to the circle where the deacon and several other gentlemen, including Mr. Williams, were conversing together, "now, sir, it's of no use to mourn over this thing. It can't be helped.

We've got out of the building all we could, and she's gone. I'M GLAD OF IT."

"Why! Colonel Arrs!" exclaimed several ladies, near by.

"Yes, sir, 'glad of it.' You were going to spend fifteen hundred dollars on it to make it answer your purposes, and then it wouldn't suit ye—and you all know it. I say I am glad of it. Now we'll have a *whole* church, a new, good, handsome, modern affair, that will be worth looking at. Look here, deacon, you and I havn't behaved very well of late, and the Lord has, I suppose, been rebuking us. At any rate, build a new house, and here's Colonel Arrs for three hundred dollars. And besides," said he, turning again, "I'll agree to worship with ye, and stand by ye for five years longer."

With this the colonel, with long strides, the smoke rolling from his cigar, pushed out of the crowd, and went away, not even looking back at the burning pile.

We had a sorrowful meeting then in the hall of the Academy. Everybody went and took one more look at the ruins before he retired to his home, and all said, "Oh! how in a moment is our pride brought into the dust."

I very much doubt whether a night has ever shut in over this valley, bringing with it a deeper sense of bereavement, and keener sorrow, than this. A moaning sound is in the air. The dark clouds have covered the heavens, the winds as they rise rekindle the dying brands of the ruins, and sparks of fire occasionally rise into the air. A great many persons have been into the minister's house this evening, and have

prayed together, and conversed freely about this unforeseen affliction. But I think that Mr. and Mrs. Williams were never more calm than now, though they show by their pale and saddened countenances, that they feel most deeply this common visitation of the Lord upon us. Deacon Hartwell bears the blow with his customary dignity. Mrs. Hartwell and Mrs. Street show that they have wept much over the loss, and Mrs. Hillhouse seems hardly to know whether to cry or to rejoice. She says that she never approved of expending fifteen hundred or two thousand dollars on the old edifice, and yet she had a great attachment to its old walls, and a deep veneration for it because of its antique character. Mr. Street says, "There is but one way for us, and that is, to form our plans immediately, and build again." So the deacon says,—indeed all say this.

Everybody admired the cool, and well-directed efforts, though personally so perilous, of the strange creature Colonel Arrs.

"He showed himself," said Deacon Hartwell, "twice the man he ever did before, and his generosity afterwards, as well as his abandoning his previous intention to separate from us, are above all praise."

So thought they all.

"I could but admire God's providence in this," said Mr. Williams; "all our arguments with him failed to alter his purpose, but God in a moment softens his heart towards us, and preserves us from a dreaded breach."

"We can build another house," said Esquire Peters

(and Dr. Alexander assented to it) "as easily, in my judgment, as to have made the contemplated repairs on the old one. The money can be raised—the house can be completed easily in the fall."

A common, hopeful, determined feeling seemed to get possession of every one, as all conversed together, and when they separated, it was with less of heart-broken discouragement written on their faces, and more of confidence and resignation.

* * * * *

We could easily murmur over this visitation of heaven, for it deprives us of our house of worship for the summer, and forces us into a small, inconvenient hall; it sweeps away our conveniences not only, but a large amount of property; it breaks up our regular order of society, and humbles and distresses us. After years of exertion and self-denial to build up and sustain the Lord's house, lo! now it is in ruins. Our beautiful bell lies broken in pieces. The little we have saved reminds us of what we have lost, and our poor pastor and his wife mourn with us, as one mourns for his friend.

* * * * *

I know not what the Parish of Edgefield has yet to encounter. Many a dark day has passed over it. Many a trial has God in his providence brought it to experience, but few sorer calamities than this. Yet, "Whom the Lord LOVETH he chasteneth, and scourges every son whom he receiveth." "I will not fear what God the Lord shall do unto me."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE NEW CHURCH GOES UP SLOWLY.

ONE very affecting circumstance occurred in the course of a few days after our church was consumed by fire. It was a donation of twenty-five dollars from the poor church at West Edgefield! It seems that they regarded the affliction as sent from God for our good, and knowing the power of sympathy, of Christian condolence, and alms to encourage the mind, and to heal the brokenness of the heart, they contributed this amount out of their deep poverty, and sent it to us, saying, "Arise ye, build again the house of the Lord."

We could but see the finger of God in this; and though we were not in circumstances really to need the gift, yet no one thought for a moment of declining it. We now saw that they were truly a grateful people, and forgot not their debt of gratitude.

The society, after several public meetings, discussions, motions, resolves, and re-resolves, after looking at every side of the question, and scanning attentively all the plans for building proposed, were at length enabled to move on to

gether, and to agree on the model for the church. All the specifications for the work were embraced in one contract with a certain company, the money was secured, I cannot here stop to tell with how much effort, and the work commenced in good earnest by the first of May.

May 10.—Mrs. Williams has now been with us rather more than a year. To say that we have been pleased with her would be tame, and almost unmeaning. We admire and love her. She has won the hearts of a great number. I would not say of all, for we know not the workings of every human heart. Her gentleness wins our affection; her piety awakens our confidence; her attention to the aged and the sick enlists our prayers; her love to the young moves our hearts; her intimate connection with us in all our labors removes our fears and disarms our prejudice; her close attention to her husband and regard of his comfort and her care of his home, awaken our common gratitude. And we rejoice to see that, apparently, she is entirely contented among us, and that it is her choice to live and labor here for the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom. The ladies seem to appreciate her society most highly. They often pass an afternoon with her, or take her in their carriages to ride; or they accompany her on some errand to the dwellings of the poor. Recently they gave her a most exquisitely delicate set of China for her tea table, and as she might want some spending money to purchase articles of dress agreeable to herself, they accompanied it with a twenty-dollar note.

May 25.—The young gentlemen of the Parish, not wishing to be behindhand in contributing to the comfort of their minister and his lady, have this day sent him a present of a beautiful top buggy, which they purchased in the city for one hundred and fifty dollars.

We know that these expressions of kindness are properly esteemed by them. They sigh less for the want of personal comforts, they assure us, than over the coldness and apathy of the church, and the common and too apparent worldliness and neglect of religion on the part of multitudes to whom this life, though an unspeakable blessing, is their all of probation.

Our Pastor has been quite unwell of late. He is now again apparently restored.

June 15.—The new church frame is all up, and is nearly enclosed. "What a tall spire!" says every one. "What a large and noble edifice, that!" say the strangers that go by. In the meantime we worship in the hall of the Academy, and if ever we have enjoyed the Sabbath and its services, it is there. So strange is it, that man is wont to measure his happiness by the outward appearance and convenience of things. But how expressive is that comment of Jehovah on the device of man, "Where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" And again, "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool." God meets with his people wherever they assemble in humility and love, to pray unto him

and to praise him. * * * And yet, we are all anxious to go into the new church, and even impatient !

July 20.—How vexatious ! The carpenters have all left their work on the church during this beautiful weather, and have gone home to cut their hay and grain !

August 25.—The house proceeds, but slowly. The master-builder is said to be hurried by too much work in other places. Our committee have several times endeavored to urge him on, but he works no faster.

September 29.—The master-workman says he shall *lose money* by his contract. We fear, consequently, that he will *slight* the work. It said by some that the contractor will fail. Perhaps this is a *ruse* of his for sympathy.

October 10.—The men are again all gone for a week ! It is said they are engaged in securing a bridge that is only partially strung, against the fall floods, and which our contractor has on his hands.

October 15.—The workmen are yet away, and the church is not ready to plaster. It is very trying to our patience. It seems strange that a contractor should engage more business than he can accomplish in a given time ! We did hope to go into the new church by the middle of November. That hope is broken. But we are gratified to have received again, re-cast and as beautiful as ever, our poor and cavalierly-used bell ! Colonel Arrs says, “we shan’t see the carpets on the new church till next April !” This seems like mockery, and trifling ; and yet it may be true !

Mr. Williams tells us that we must have patience; "by-and-bye it will all be accomplished."

November 12.—The work of plastering the church is now going on. We are now only anxious that it should be put on in time to save it from the frost! The church in B—— lost its ceiling by the frost. One afternoon soon after the congregation had left, it all fell with a tremendous crash into the slips and aisles below!

December 12.—The cold is beginning to pinch. The builders are doing everything in their power by stoves to hurry the drying of the mortar on the walls. Mrs. Williams has been quite sick with a fever for several days. Her husband seems to be very anxious about her. He is not well himself. The ladies have been very kind and attentive to her.

December 30.—The contractor says that he has lost money by all his jobs, and that this will ruin him unless he can have five hundred dollars in addition to the original contract, and that even then he "cannot have the house ready till the first of March."

"Say April," was the reply of Colonel Arrs.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick. I am becoming indifferent now whether we go into it in February, March, April, or even May. So singularly does the mind act, when it has been a long time on the stretch and repeatedly disappointed. Mrs. Street says, "the house has been so long in building I don't pretend to recollect precisely where we are."

Mrs. Williams having recovered from her indisposition, has invited the ladies to meet at the Parsonage to decide about the carpets and such other furniture of the church as they propose to furnish.

* * * * *

We are all now passively waiting for Spring !

CHAPTER XXIV.

TRouble FROM ABROAD.

WE have suffered ourselves to dream that all was well, and that now we were passed the point of further trial, or perhaps of correction. How stupid, how short-sighted, how feeble and how unwise in judgment is man. He needs constant chastening in order to teach him what he is, and whither his steps are leading him. *We* need this surely, or the Lord who has been gracious to us would not so often lay his hand upon us. It is true, we have not again broken our bell, burnt up our church, or lost Colonel Arrs; but we have but just saved ourselves from the loss of our *Pastor!* And that not by feebleness, sickness, mortal bereavement and sorrow. Then we could have borne it. But by a call from the wealthy church in the town of R——. It is, we suppose, one of the strongest and most influential churches in the State. And having recently lost their aged and beloved Pastor, what do they but invade our peaceful fold, I will say as hungry *wolves* for prey, and seizing *our own* good, talented, beloved, necessary, and honored Pastor, attempt by a *call*, and a *bribe*, to draw him from us! Is

this right? Is this after Christ? Is this the studying of things that work for peace? Had we a *poor* minister they would not thank us for him. Had we a quarrel, they would not have hushed it by gently removing him from us. Did we wish them to take him they would have repelled our overtures as an insult. But *because* he is good and talented, say, they, "He is just the man for *us*, let them find another man good enough for them. *We* can give him a thousand dollars salary and a bonus of five hundred more." So they offered it. So they sought to do themselves good at our imminent peril. Is this right? No—*it is not right*. If the Pastor wished to leave us, or if we wished mutually to separate, the case would be entirely different. But to come in and *make* a breach and produce a quarrel where now there is harmony, can only be wrong. The history of our church for the last twenty years is one of struggle, in part growing out of ministerial relations. Now that we are at peace, it savors of Satan's artifice to introduce this apple of discord, gold though it may be. We knew by the haggard and care-worn expression of our Pastor's face, that something more than usual rested on his mind, but we were happy to learn at length, that though repeatedly visited and entreated by a select committee of the most influential citizens of that place, to yield to their wishes, he decidedly refused; having, as he said, sought earnestly at the throne of grace for the direction of his Heavenly Father. He told them that he was not unmindful of the honor conferred in their selecting him to fill a place which one of the most

eminent divines of the day had occupied so long and so successfully, and towards which the eyes of many a minister of more ability than he himself possessed, were undoubtedly turned with more or less desire. But he assured them that he could not view the call *to leave his own people*, as one sent to him from the great head of the church.

There was soon a whispering of what was on foot among the people. As none of the proceedings came to light, there broke out a common expression first of grief, then of indignation, and subsequently great rejoicings and congratulations.

Mr. Williams, in order to give a true version of the whole business to the Parish, in the place of an erroneous one, that would be "guessed" up if he did not, at the close of the service one Sabbath, informed the congregation of the matter, in a brief rehearsal of the principal points of the case.

When he came to the conclusion, they were ready to break out in one general "hurrah!" "good," "that's right," but their good sense restrained them. However, after being dismissed, a great many ladies and gentlemen crowded around him, and assured him of their warm appreciation of the motives by which he had been governed, and of the strong hold on their affections which he had secured by his course.

And now we learn, although this whole matter is very recent, that, as though the Lord would frown on the acts which a *sister church* has been guilty of, viz., that of tempting

away from one that was a little less strong than itself, a *faithful shepherd*, and *leaving the fold unprotected*, the church in R—— is in a violent dispute concerning another man, and that it is almost certain it will be torn asunder ! And we have also heard that a frown no less significant than this, has rested on the rich Holland street church in the city of W——, which was guilty of enticing away from a country church a minister of considerable reputation and gifts, and placing him over itself. In a very short time, it was found that he was *not the right sort of a minister for the city*, much as he might have been esteemed in the country, and that unless he could be shaken off, the church would sink into feebleness and contempt. A great rebuke this, both on the minister, if he were ambitious, and on the church.

May heaven grant that no root of bitterness to trouble us, may grow out of this affair, so fortunately, as it would seem by the good providence of God, blown over.

Recently, some difficulty in the choir has caused us anxiety. It is not easy to tell where it will end, nor is it any less difficult to know precisely what it is all about. But there is a great amount of ill feeling produced, and it is extending all through the society. The friends of one party talk hard against the apologists for the other, and we have been mortified beyond expression to see our large and *elegant* choir all leave the orchestra, and refuse to take any part in the singing. We have, of late, had what is termed "*congregational singing*," the whole audience uniting in it,

but the pleasure of it is greatly diminished by our constantly being reminded of its cause. Under the circumstances, moreover, it seems a constrained effort at cheerful praise. We know, how loud and rich soever the voices rise, that the members of the choir consider it but a *dernier* resort, and that all the partisans of both sides hold it in derision, or else shrug their shoulders in nervous irritability of mind.

It appears that the origin of the trouble was something like this, although I would not by any means assert that other points of dispute were not involved. Mr. Whitman, the chorister, who, by the way, is the Principal of our Academy, is said to have intimated to Horace Myers, a tenor singer, that he was constantly in the habit of falling from the pitch, and producing a discord. Horace, who has frequently led the choir when there was no other one present able to, and who is proud of his singing as of anything, retorted on him sharply, and accused him of selecting music that nobody could perform, and especially of singing *minor* pieces. Horace then took his hat, and went down stairs. In the afternoon his sister also deserted the choir. A great flare-up followed, and we have been four weeks in a very unsettled state.

We fear that our pastor will, in some way, find himself committed with either one party or the other. Mr. Whitman frequently calls on him, and, perhaps, freely converses with him about it. And two or three days ago, Horace Myers and his sister called there. It would not be strange

if Mr. Williams should let drop some remark that one party or the other might report to his disadvantage. He has told me, that he can't see where the thing will end. And I know that Mrs. Williams, who thinks highly of Matilda Myers, is quite distressed about it. Archibald says it will all blow over by-and-by.

The minister of Surry, a few years ago, took such a personal interest in a difficulty of this sort, that it led to his dismissal. The whole town was stirred up by the controversy. The minister preached about it, and prayed, and conversed, thinking, I suppose, that he should be able to quell the excitement; but his own feelings becoming deeply enlisted on one side of the belligerents, the result was his dismissal, and a great split in the society. All the wisdom of a large council of eminent ministers was called for to preserve the church from ruin.

As far as I can learn from both parties in this controversy, Mr. Williams has as yet identified himself with neither, nor said anything to offend.

Deacon Hartwell, Deacon Armstrong, and Deacon Willard, together with Esquire Peters, met together the other day, and discussed the whole matter. I believe they intend to see the principals in this unhappy affair, and endeavor to effect a compromise.

* * * * *

March 2d.—The committee of deacons for pacificating the choir controversy, spent the whole of yesterday with the parties, but accomplished nothing. Mr. Whitman threatens

to leave town, an event we should deplore, for he is a valuable instructor at the Academy, and a man who has interested himself a good deal in the young society of the village.

* * * * *

March 10th.—Joy ! joy. At last, through the perseverance of the Committee, and a few judicious female helpers, the difficulty in our choir has reached the end. All parties seem to be reconciled, but I dare not inquire on what basis the settlement was effected. Last Sabbath the singers were in their old places. I will let “well enough” alone.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DEDICATION OVER—THE SEXTON ALONE.

COLONEL ARRS was right. January, February, March, came and went. Still we were prevented from worshipping in our new, elegant and noble house. But April has come! April! with its warm sun and promise of summer. Yes, at last we have reached the long-deferred hope! We have come to the point of many expectations, sighs, and prayers. We have now our new house of worship! and it is arranged with so much taste, neatness, and convenience, that we all exclaim, "How beautiful! how rich!" We find our way to our slips with ill-concealed pride, and an uneasy humility. We hardly know whether we most admire the beautiful and appropriate discourses of our pastor, or the soft and luxurious cushions we sit on. We admire the minister as he speaks, but "oh! what a splendid, elegant model of a pulpit does he preach in." The choir pour out full tones of happy song, but "what a splendid reflection and echo do the arches and fretted vaults give back." The aisles are broad enough to accommodate all the people as they come and go, but "indeed, what a soft and rich carpet do they press with

their feet!" "Delicate fresco! beautiful and perfect representation of architecture itself, the divine, lofty art." "What a melodious bell! fit to adorn even that tall, and beautiful spire, one hundred and eighty feet high!" The very doors of the sanctuary swing easily on their hinges, and invite us who have been long, long, long from HOME, and are weary, to go in and regale ourselves. And yet, it is the LORD's! How can mortal man build unto Him a temple in which he will abide, if the heart be not itself the temple of the Holy Ghost? What house will YE build unto me, saith the Lord? May we in due time learn to feel, as we cross the threshold, that "this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" May it be said, also, of many, "This, and that man were born in her."

The dedication of the house was one of the best things of the kind that ever came off in this Parish. As it was advertised in the papers, and the house had been long in building, and was greatly admired as a model, a very large concourse of people assembled, filling the galleries as well as the floor and aisles below. In the pulpit, with Mr. Williams, were the Rev. Dr. Heartwell, of the city of A—, Rev. Prof. Dewdings, of the University at N—, the Rev. Messrs. Brown, of Hunting, Comstock, of West Edgefield, and Scott, of Uplandville. The sermon by our pastor was from the words of the patriarch Jacob, "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, surely the LORD is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, how

dreadful is this place ! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Never did he exhibit a richer, broader spirit of the gospel minister, than on this occasion. Never did he seem to us so eminently happy in his remarks and illustrations ; never did he with more delicacy and truth, refer to the history of the Parish, especially for the last year. Frequently, as he alluded to trials and discouragements, did his voice falter, and his eye was for a moment dimmed. But then the recollection of attendant mercy and blessing restored him, and restored us who heard him, and both himself and the people mingled together their sadness and joy.

It was a touching little incident to rehearse, which I have spoken about already, namely, the donation of twenty-five dollars from the society of West Edgefield. The manner in which he referred to it, caused the whole audience to weep.

"Never," said he, "may they want a friend in the hour of their necessity."

It seemed almost too much for the good pastor of that Parish to bear, as he sat in the pulpit, and was so unexpectedly made to hear the just praises of his own poor people.

The choir gave us some of their best efforts. They seem now to be entirely harmonious, and their singing was executed in high taste.

I am sorry to say, that as Mrs. Alexander was going off the steps of the church, she made a misstep and fell. She was able, with assistance, to rise, and was supported home, groaning bitterly, and complaining of a sprained ankle.

But although she has since been entirely confined to her bed, she has the best of care, and will, the doctor thinks, walk again in a few weeks.

But what a happy man is the sexton ! He will hardly allow Deacon Hartwell, or even Mr. Williams, to touch his bell rope ; and although he has the same dress, the same sallow, meagre-looking aspect, there is a brilliancy in his eye that lights up his features with an unusual animation, when, with one hand only on the rope, he brings the nicely-adjusted bell to its equipoise with a single revolution, and sends afar, over hill and dale, the deep rich tones he loves so well.

The services of the dedication were over, and the people had dispersed. Carefully the lights were all extinguished, and the lantern flame of the sexton was alone burning, casting but a pale spectral glare around the porch, while its owner was buttoning his coat to leave, and, as his custom was, soliloquizing with himself, thus :

“Don’t tell me they’ll build a church over in the “Hollow” smarter than this ; they can’t do it. I know they are picking up there nicely. They say that old Hurams is going to move in there, and put up his clock factory, with a hundred men. What of that ?” Perhaps he won’t build a church for ’em if he does. He may give ’em a twenty-dollar clock ! ha ! ha ! But where’ll they get such a bell as that ? (*pointing to the belfry.*) Ah ! that’s a bell ! Now just hear it— No ! no ! it won’t do,” and he let go the rope, which he had involuntarily seized with both hands.

"Besides, what's the use of two, when one hand's enough? I will say of Colonel Arrs, the best thing he ever did was to save the old bell. Never was there such metal in a ringer afore. She's the very old zinc itself, some gold and silver in it, and steel, I s'pose. Didn't I pilot the ministers into the new pulpit handsomely? Didn't I save a few of the best slips for smart ones? Mercy on us! how the lamps glimmered—you'd have thought 'um real gasses. And what lots of people filled up 'bove and below. And the minister preached good—fust rate, too. He al'ays does for that. And the gals gave us singing, too, I reckun—yes, they're keen on voice. But oh! what a bell, what a bell! I'm a good mind jist to go up and look at it, and say 'good night.' Everybody says 'good night' to his friend. I will. I'll go and see *my* friend."

So he went warily up, up into the belfry, and feasted his eyes with the sight of his idol in repose, and stooped down and looked up into its arch, and felt its smooth and heavy sides, and admired again and again its beautiful proportions. Ah! idoliser!

So magnified the sexton his office.

Of all the parish of Edgefield who were made happy by the opening of the new church, who more happy than he?

CHAPTER XXVI.

CHURCH PROPRIETIES AND IMPROPRIETIES.

How desirable a thing is order, and a due regard to the proprieties of life, howsoever that life may be viewed. Especially do we love a true taste in the arrangement of things. We admire this in persons, and in the works of art. We are affected, also, by dignity of deportment, and by calm, cool, manly self-possession. We copy the fairest, and best examples, and find our highest happiness in habits of order, taste, and propriety.

I have often thought of the church as a model of these, by the necessity of nature. The serious, devout, grave and still nature of religion, appeals to these elements of conception in the soul, and man who worships, finds a refreshment of his being in the sombre, quiet, solemn temple, in unison with things that are true. So much of our time is employed in worldly business, in frivolous pleasures, in the common cases of earth, that religion, if she be to us a renovator, and truthful instructor, must speak out of her holy places in accents of true order, taste, solemnity, and propriety.

We do not want the frivolity of the drawing-room, nor the studied politeness of the thronged, gay promenade, nor the din of the camp, nor yet the boorishness of ignorance and stupidity, to give their form to the sanctuary.

The Edgefield Church enjoys the benefit of four beautiful elms, which in the summer cast an agreeable shade upon it, and help to shut away the rays of the sun. The blinds are also of great service in protecting the audience from a too glaring light. And there is a stillness and solemnity in the house, that is gratifying to all who love the Sabbath, and find delight in the public service of God.

We can but notice the great propriety of manner which the people observe with those who unite with us in our worship. They enter the house with a still and careful tread. They go directly as possible with no confusion to their slips. They sit down quietly to listen to the word that may be spoken. They are not incessantly rising here and there, to exchange seats, to bow and smile and chatter. They seem in earnest to worship God.

The church in the stirring village of Turnwheel, which is situated ten or fifteen miles north-west of this town, is a very handsome edifice, with a tall steeple and loud bell. But it is built on a sandy soil, without a tree around it, and as close to the street as possible. The service is one of great inattention, the young people seem glad to see each other and shake hands, and pass compliments profusely around the entrances, at the registers, and in the slips, before the minister begins to speak. The organ is played all the

morning, from the first bell till the minister is seated, and sometimes long after, as the organist wishes to learn all he can at these leisure moments, and to show off the quality of the instrument, not to say his own science, to the wondering people as they come in. The singers are very busy turning over their leaves, whispering, smiling, bowing. Everything seems quite cheerful and easy.

In the meantime, the church is filling up. Gentlemen rise and leave their seats, three or four in a platoon, to accommodate a lady. Some one beckons with his hand to a friend on the other side of the church to come and sit with him. Gentlemen slam their pew doors, and make a bluster, a few pious souls make their way through all this irreverence and clamor into the regions of Sabbath day meditation and spiritual consecration, but even they cast uneasy and imploring glances at the pulpit to see if the minister is not arrived and about to commence.

Such, most happily, is not the state of things with ourselves. Few are the people who assemble at the church before the ringing of the "second" bell. And usually it is true, that still fewer come in after the bell has ceased tolling. As I have before observed, they enter the house and seek their slips as those in earnest to worship God. They are sober without melancholy, they are reverential without dissimulation, they are respectful and courteous without officiousness and vanity.

When the Pastor arrives, Mr. Parks suspends the tolling of his bell, though every one of its vibrations is music to

his soul. He then immediately conducts the strangers who may be present to the vacant slips, and disposes of himself in such a manner as to hear the word. As the Pastor goes into his desk, the soft and solemn tones of the organ rise and cast their indescribably precious and subduing influence over the soul. The minister sits calmly down in his pulpit and selects the passages of Scripture to be read, and the hymns which are to follow. He seems to be occupied with sober, solemn meditation and prayer. Directly as the tones of the organ diminish away into vibrations imperceptible to mortal sense, sonorous and glorious harmony e'en yet, it may be, to all that hath life, by us unseen, he rises with the solemnity, dignity and propriety of the man of God, the "legate of the skies," to implore the blessing of Heaven! Great and solemn and interesting duty! How can it ever be performed with other than holy and reverential decorum?

I am aware, however, that as much as we love our dark and solemn church, and the order and propriety that prevails in our assembly and worship, there are congregations who differ from us in respect of these very matters. I have already referred to one. They seem to love the light, and throw open the windows and blinds as much as possible. The noise and dust from without unite with the confusion within, to drive out of the soul much of its innate, and nearly all of its acquired solemnity.

If then the choir has no self-respect—the members of it tittering and whispering when not singing—and when sing-

ing, *such* singing! rather screaming for their own gratification and in orchestral rivalry than in soul-felt melody leading God's worshipping people nearer the SHEKINAH, the Lord of grace and glory; if the Pastor is careless of his own deportment, restlessly moving about in the pulpit, extravagantly gazing here and there, undignified in his manner, not unfrequently troubling himself to find seats for the people, his attention manifestly all absorbed in other than the great and important errand that should have taken *him* to the sanctuary, if the congregation are idle and listless in their manner, and it may be actually disrespectful and thoughtless, what good can be expected from the courts of the Lord?

There is a little church nestled sweetly among the trees in the quiet village of Bath, where the neatness of the house, the taste displayed in all its arrangements for the convenience of speaker and hearer, and the propriety of the worshippers in all their deportment fills the most giddy mind with awe, and awakens the liveliest interest in the considerate and prayerful. The servant of God speaks as though sent from heaven to men. The voices of praise lift up the soul and gladden it, or melt into contrition all the pride of unrenewed natures and thus prepares them for the reception of the pure word of grace. If, of any on earth, it is around such scenes that,

“——— holy memories cluster,
Like the stars when storms are past
Pointing up to that far heaven
We may hope to gain at last.”

Our Pastor has won no small share of the good opinion of his people and of strangers also, by his consistent brevity, and scriptural phraseology in prayer. His prayers are short, rarely ever occupying more than ten or fifteen minutes of the service, yet are they not wanting in copiousness of thought and propriety of expression. They are often clothed in scriptural language, and deeply interest and affect the hearer. He does not seem to pray against time, to aid a short sermon, nor so much for the ears of men as for their hearts. His prayer is an humble thanksgiving, a devout praise, a broken confession, and earnest supplication. It is the act of a forgiven sinner in communion with his God and Saviour.

The Rev. Mr. —, who occasionally preaches to us, is remarkable for his long and wordy prayers. They are very good prayers notwithstanding. But it is noticed that as twenty, twenty-five and even thirty minutes expire under them, how the people become uneasy, sensitive, nervous, and frequently dull, as though the prayer were a soporific, a gentle opiate to the wearied mind. He does not know this we suppose. He may be very much elevated in his soul by his communion with his Maker, but even praying hearers often wonder that he continues so long upon the mount. The prayer takes the widest possible range, and using up all time, buries itself in eternity. Having nearly got through the latter, it comes to an end, often with the abruptness of one who starts back from the brow of a precipice. Very long extempore prayers must of

course be a great exhaustion to him who offers them, and they seldom do, in comparison with short ones, their proportion of the good.

The Rev. Mr. ——— preached in one Parish till he died in old age. He attributed his success, in a great measure, to short prayers, short hymns, and short sermons.

Mr. Williams seldom gives out more than four stanzas of a hymn—often but three. Yet sometimes the unity of a hymn is broken unless the whole be read. As a rule, he prefers that the singing should be easy and merely sufficient, rather than toilsome and an over feast.

His sermons are sometimes long. As a common rule, however, they are short. They rarely exceed thirty minutes in length. Sometimes they occupy even less time. I have known him to preach a full hour. He takes time in his study to condense his thoughts, and is therefore saved the necessity of too great verbiage in the pulpit. His sermons are good specimens of pulpit address, and when any of them have been printed, they have been read with attention, and admired for their correctness in style and doctrine.

He is not much accustomed to it, but he can, if it be necessary, preach extempore. His power seems to lie in an earnest, sincere desire to do good, and in a firm belief that the effective preaching of the gospel is the heaven-appointed instrument by which to accomplish it.

There may have been greater, better men than he, but he is great enough and good enough for us.

CHAPTER XXVII.

JOURNAL—ANXIETIES OF A PARISH.

SEPTEMBER 5th.—It is nearly two years and a half since Mr. Williams brought here his interesting lady. We have rejoiced greatly in this addition to our society, and with them in their happy union. How well do they seem fitted for one another, to support and cheer each other in their labors and sacrifices, and to give all that judicious counsel, so much necessary in the station they fill. They seem frequently overcome with a sense of their great responsibility. There is often a shade of melancholy on his brow, and he carries about an exhausted and wearied frame that we tremble to see. Hitherto, however, he has been sustained in the discharge of his numerous cares, and we can but hope he will receive strength to go forward in his Master's cause for many a year still.

What a great blessing is their little infant son to them, now nearly a fortnight old. He is to be called GEORGE, after his father. I am told they are very much delighted with the child, and that they may well be fond of him, as he is a hearty, noble-looking boy! He will, I dare say, help "drive dull care away."

Esquire Peters made a sensible remark in my hearing the other day, as indeed he often does. It was this: "No one man has, probably, as much care on his mind continually, as an earnest, faithful minister." May the Lord, then, sustain *our* minister.

The care and attention, the expense and management of a Parish, is also no trifling consideration. It has occurred to me that there are few persons who know how great and how unremitting are the duties that fall to a well-organized and sustained Parish. Take our own for example. As I am clerk of the society, it is in my power to tell how many society meetings have been called in any given period, within the last ten years. There have been fifteen regularly-warned Parish meetings the past year. And whole days have been consumed in discussions as to what course it would be best for us to take in the emergency in which we found ourselves, and respecting the good of the society in general. Then there must be a standing committee, and a committee of building; committees to form plans and submit them to meetings; committee on the bell; committee on salary; committee to purchase additional lot for building; committee on collection of funds. All these, and others, I remember. Then what a tide of business rolls in upon us. We must make and hear all the reports of committees. We must attend to the business itself. Large sums of money must be raised, and this by going in person to every individual of the Parish. If there is a church edifice to build, a bell to be recast, or lot to purchase, or

salary to be raised, then the society, by its committees, is at work day and night, till all is done. If there is any delay, it must be remedied; if discontent, it must be removed. If the pastor be uneasy, he must be humored; and relieved, if poor or sick. If he is sought for by another church, every effort must be put forth to retain him, though the people may already be severely burdened with taxes. If the choir are at variance, they must be indulged and pacified. If a part of the society threaten to leave, and form a new one, the greatest exertion must be made to induce them to remain. If defamatory reports are current respecting any members of the society, they must be traced out and silenced. If any grumble against the minister, they must be reasoned with, and brought to surrender. If any refuse to pay their taxes, they must be abated.

And so it is in the church. What a constant attention to the forms and duties of the covenant. What anxiety for the spread of the gospel, and for the growth of all in piety. What efforts to honor the Sabbath, to attend church through wet, and cold, and storm, and heat. What sacrifices of time and convenience to collect money for benevolent objects. What incessant duties, as the followers of Christ, do they perform in behalf of the world!

The thousand-and-one vexations they meet with; the little sympathy extended to them from others; the anxieties they have every Sabbath for the minister, that he may edify the church and save souls; for his good name before strangers; and, at all other times, for his health, for his happiness,

for his family, for his comfortable support, know all they, who either as society men, or church members, have felt resting on them the burden of sustaining gospel institutions by their substance, and by their exertions, their prayers and sacrifices.

Churches and Parishes are sometimes distressed on account of unpleasant and mortifying rumors that go here and there, respecting the minister, or his wife. "He is a trifler." "He is a poor preacher." "He don't care for the poor." "He is a vain man, all for show." "He has about preached himself out." "He is already candidating for another pulpit." "All he cares for is ease and money."

Let these sayings be true of him, and no slander, and how do they cut to the heart his people! If they see him in the sanctuary, without a good and proper preparation, how mourn they over his neglect. And yet they are easily pleased, if they love him. His elaborate productions on paper, that cost him many weary midnight vigils, and long and critical study, affording them no more real pleasure, oft, than his simple extemporaneous sermons, that flow from a warm heart, alive with the flame of holy love.

Do the rumors say of *her*: "She is a hinderance to his piety." "She is fond of dress, and extravagance." "She cares nothing, does nothing for religion." "She is a disturber of the quiet of the parish." "Her piety is all on the surface." If these things are so, how heavy is the reproach we bear, and yet how simple is the way to the heart of a whole parish thus mourning on account of these reports.

Let her but serve her Saviour in the simplicity of a child-like confidence, doing her main works from love to him and love to souls; how soon then will the reproach die away and the hearts of the people of God be at rest!

How thankful then ought *we* to be for a good minister, and an endeared Pastor's wife! Has not the Lord given them to us for our good—we who deserve only his rebukes.

What a season has the past two years been to us of loss, of effort, of success, of anxiety, of keenest suspense, of wonderful providences, of great labor, great solitudes, great danger, yet of striking deliverances and mercies!

We have had no bad luck without some co-answering good, no good without some bad. So is it ever in this world, trial and mercy go together hand in hand, and yet I would by no means declare that our afflictions have been as heavy as our mercies have been rich, and undeserved. "Praise the Lord for his goodness."

* * * * *

The engineers for surveying the route of the *Railroad* through our town, are, it is said, undecided whether to run it immediately back of the village and near the line of the factories, or in the "Hollow" village, half a mile west. This is a matter of some importance. If we lose the road, it will be a disadvantage to us, and will contribute to build up the "Hollow." They already begin to exult, to our extreme sensitiveness. They say they will soon have a large

church there, and the Methodists have already commenced building one.

September 10th.—There is a good deal of feeling among us about the Railroad. Deacon Hartwell, Esquire Peters, Doctor Alexander, Marcus Street, Colonel Arrs, and many others of our first men, say the railroad *must* come into our village. That if it does not, it will injure the old Society and our whole village permanently, and beyond recovery. They are laboring hard to induce the engineers to give this route the preference. On the other hand, old Mr. Hurams, the clock manufacturer, who has built a large shop in the “Hollow,” says it *must* and *shall* go there. Already the two villages are at swords’-points about it. The people over there say they will come no more to our church, but will build one for themselves, and if possible get *Mr. Williams* away from us; that they have as much right to him as we have.

Truly, we are again launched on a troubled sea! Last Sabbath Mr. and Mrs. Williams brought their beautiful infant son to the church, and the father took it in his arms and baptized it.

Mr. Williams looks in feeble health.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE YOUNG FOLKS—COMPANY AT ESQUIRE PETERS.

NOVEMBER 5th.—Colonel Arrs seems to be a different sort of a person truly, from what he was formerly. He is always at church. His store is more orderly. His manners more soft and agreeable. I can but hope that his heart has received some serious and lasting impressions. His son Henry has just returned from Europe, and as he is now twenty-two years of age, he has gone into the store as a partner in the business. He is a young man of fine character, and a professor of religion. He is nearly as tall as his father, and has a sedate and very gentlemanly bearing, which might well serve all the young men of the place as a model. Some of them would do well to copy some model other than their own. I am sorry that there are any among us who are disposed to rowdyism. But the truth causes me to say that it is so. We were afraid that Jonas Hartwell would turn out badly, but he became seriously impressed during the great revival, and subsequently made a profession of religion. Since that time he has been diligently engaged in studies, and has this fall entered College,

we hope and believe, with the determination to become a minister. One of Mr. Street's sons is rather wild, I do not say that he is a rowdy. One of my own boys, Thomas, causes me anxiety. He is not fond of his books, nor does he *love* the Lord nor the sanctuary. I cannot here say how much my heart bleeds for him. My prayer is that he may be saved, indeed I think he will be, I can trust, I believe, the promises of my heavenly father, "ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." He *is* fond of home! I trust he may be kept from the snares of the wicked. Messrs. Jones & Wilcox, though men in good business, have little to do in religious affairs. Miss Harriet Jones and Erastus Wilcox are members of our church, but the parents of neither family are pious, and Mr. Wilcox attends, usually, the Methodist church. Mr. and Mrs. Jones come to our meeting, although their attendance is by no means regular. Peter Wilcox is a noisy, out-'o-nights, sort of a fellow, and Hart Jones is little better. They are both quite ignorant young men, and in school were often severely flogged for their ill manners and bad lessons. They go with companions of like sentiment, and it is believed they belong to a gang of young men who steal and gamble. They have frequently been seen almost, and once or thrice quite intoxicated, and their parents, it is said, *now* begin to wish they had been more strict with them in their childhood. Harriet and Erastus feel deeply for their brothers, and I hope that their counsels and prayers may yet reach their hearts,

and cause them to repent. Mr. and Mrs. Peters have but one son, and he is a merchant in New York city. They have four daughters who are intelligent and beautiful young ladies, Esther, Mary, Henrietta, Emma. They are affable and agreeable, yet have about them a little something *airy*, like their mother. But of course it little becomes me to speak against them when my second son Robert is a persevering, and I suppose, an accepted suitor for the hand of Esther! Robert is the great "business" child of our family. Although still a young man, only in his twenty-third year, he has already gone to a considerable extent into the *Lumber* trade, and to my astonishment, during the past year, as he tells me, has actually fulfilled a contract with the "Government" to furnish lumber for certain works in the harbor of C——, amounting to fifty thousand dollars. He has an office also in the city, and assures me that in ten years he will be worth half a million of dollars! Poor boy! is he mad? I have never allowed myself any such extravagant notions. Here, contentedly, on a little property, I have lived for many a year, seldom going from home and never to engage in the speculations of the world. Poor Robert is already over head and ears in them. I conclude that he will either "make or break," and rather fear he will go so rashly and deeply into these transactions that he will ruin himself and all the rest of us! We shall see. My oldest son, Archibald, has no disposition either to dissipation or roving. More like myself, he pursues the peaceful way of life we follow at home, though he is of great

strength, and will sometimes arouse himself and perform acts of business that prove him possessed of a strong and clear mind.

Elizabeth Burgess is a quiet and agreeable young lady, who, though plain in her personal appearance, is one of the most sensible and pious of the young people. She is always engaged in religion, her mind seemingly taking that direction, while it is true of a great many, that they regard religion with aversion—the practical duties of it as offensive and burdensome. But you will find her well acquainted with the condition of all the sick and afflicted; all the poor; all that have not proper clothing for a respectable appearance at church; all they who are pricked in heart, and who are anxious to know what they must do to be saved. She is a great help to the pastor. I know not how many times she has either in person, or through another, informed him of the temporal or spiritual wants of some of her peculiar *protégés*, and been the means of awakening his anxiety, and of securing his efforts in their behalf! She has an easy way when “in company,” even, of obtaining his ear, and of sliding into it her descriptions of the sufferings, or the peculiar state of this one, or of that. Interesting and pious Elizabeth! I do not wonder that your excellent mind and heart should have won the regard of my son Archibald. Nor do I wonder less, that hitherto such an exalted character as yours, such eminent devotion to all truth and duty, should have its reasons for declining matrimonial ties. * * *
Poor Archibald!

Angelina Hartwell is a great favorite with us all. She is especially agreeable to, and fond of the "old folks," as we are facetiously termed by the young. A preference, by the way, that many of her own age have often wondered at. She is a young lady of great personal attractions, and her piety and beauty correspond with her intelligent nature, to make her mature in character and judgment above many her equals in age, fortune, and privileges. Evelina Street is much like her in many respects. They have been greatly attached to each other since their fifteenth year, when they were rescued, by the great exertions of Henry Arrs, from a watery grave, the ice in the river on which they and several others were amusing themselves, having unfortunately given way.

* * * * *

Last evening a large and interesting group of our young people, and a good company of "the elders among us," assembled at Esquire Peters's. The Ladies' Society had been invited to meet there, and Mrs. Peters had sent special word to all the members, that Mrs. Williams, who had not met with them for some time, would be present in the evening. Mrs. Peters was in high spirits in view of the occasion. Her rooms were handsomely decorated with pictures, and with marble busts and statues, and house statuettes, and exquisite china ornaments, dogs, and fawns, and lions in repose or rampant, and gold and silver-tipped vases of the rarest patterns. Heavy-clasped, and gilt bibles, carelessly reposed on the same rose-wood table, beneath a tall and

splendid mirror, with Byron in gilt, and Shelly, and Cowper, and Shakspeare, and Milton. *Eau de Cologne*, from open-mouthed bottles, negligently concealed behind some bolder objects, cast a pleasing odor through her parlors, and the *new burning oil*, or *fluid*, just introduced among us, illuminated them, in my conception, almost like gas itself.

Mrs. Peters in a rich and heavily-flounced black silk dress, moved with dignity, ease, and grace, through her own highly-wrought *tableaus*, and with all that refined manner for which she was celebrated among us, received and attended to, her friends, and guests.

Mr. and Mrs. Williams came at eight. She received Mrs. Williams at the threshold of her best parlor, in the midst of all the company, and pressed her gracefully to her heart.

“Oh!” said she, “you have done us all, and me especially, an extraordinary honor and pleasure, my dear lady, by venturing out this evening. Be seated in this easy rocker—I know you must be greatly overcome by this exertion and fatigue.”

Mrs. Williams assured her of the great pleasure she enjoyed in the present opportunity to see her, and meet the ladies again, and said that she hardly knew whether she ought to occupy the easiest seat in the room, or to offer it to her poor husband.

“Oh! my dear lady,” said Mrs. Peters, “how considerate! True, poor sir! how pale and feeble you look.

Esther, dear, bring from the other room that large cushioned arm-chair that Mr. Williams loves so well.

All eyes were now turned upon Mr. Williams, who did indeed, at first, look pale and feeble, but immediately red and excited. The ladies gently forced him and his wife into their seats, and after a multitude of complimentary salutations, and congratulations, and sympathetic ejaculations, the conversation went on,—the buzz, the laugh, the whisper, the loud, long harrangue, the confidential declaration, the presentimental wonder, the shrug, the cold shoulder, the compliment, the “Oh! dear,”—went on as before—as ever go on these in the promiscuous assembly.

Deacon Hartwell was present, and sat down by his minister, and a group of chatty and agreeable ladies.

“And how is our poor neighbor Sweetser to-day?” inquired he of Mr. Williams.

“He is better, sir, I think, or he is, certainly, more comfortable, and is very cheerful under his misfortune.”

“Poor, suffering gentleman!” said the exquisitely sensitive Mrs. Littleway.

“What has happened?” inquired two or three at the same time.

“Why,” said the deacon, “he has been almost killed. He was half a mile from home, day before yesterday, I think it was, with his team, and they, in some manner took fright when he was near them, and ran. Before he could escape or stop them, they threw him down; and, although his neck escaped, his limb did not, for the wheel ran over

it, and it was broken in two places. He lies now on his bed with a splintered limb, at least for six weeks."

"Oh! how bad," said Mrs. Street.

"It is a calamitous providence!" said Mrs. Littleway. "Truly," said she, "I don't feel reconciled to it, nor do I see how it could have happened."

"Happened!" exclaimed the deacon. "I don't see how it could have been avoided. And as for it being 'a calamitous providence, let us rather say, madam, a merciful one.'"

"Oh! to be sure. It is 'merciful' when we reflect on what might have been. But, sir, I never feel reconciled to misfortunes."

"You don't have strong faith enough in an *over-ruling* providence.

"Oh! yes, sir, and there is my difficulty. I can't see why an over-ruling providence allows his own children so much suffering."

"For his own glory, madam, and for their good—for their discipline and preparation for the future world. Shall the poor, sinful, and frail child of earth, live here all his days without trial, disappointment, tribulation, affliction to humble him? 'I will show him,' said the Lord to the prophet, 'how great things he shall SUFFER for my name's sake.'"

"Alas! Deacon Hartwell, I fear that you think me absolutely reprobate as to the faith, but I am not. I *contend* for the faith. I have *all* faith; I do believe every word you have said. I am good orthodox—but alas! that it must be

so with us—alas ! that so good a man as Mr. Sweetser, so exemplary and so kind, should come to suffer these things. My sympathies raise up my rebellion against,—I had almost said, the moral government of God.”

“ Yes, that’s it, madam, you don’t want to suffer, and so you say, ‘ why is there suffering ? ’ You might as well complain of your mercies as of your chastisements.”

“ Oh, no Sir, why so ?

“ Because they are not perfect. Your blessings here are as nothing in comparison with the good things that God has prepared for them that love him. Your blessings only give you a little taste of good ; so your afflictions are only slight corrections, they might be a thousand fold heavier.”

“ Well, deacon, I never before got such a view of mercies. I’ve always thought that comforts and mercies were real, positive enjoyments, and I have regarded misfortune as something that was supremely arbitrary and unnecessary, and about *as bad as it could be*.”

“ No ! no ! ” said the deacon, “ you must not think so.”

Said Mr. Williams, “ Mr. Sweetser ‘ says it is all right. ’ ”

“ Ah ! he’s a heavenly saint ! ” said she.

“ He is a very humble, and useful christian,” said Mr. Williams.

“ Precisely, Sir, that’s my opinion.”

“ To change the subject a little,” said Mrs. Alexander, “ will you please to inform me, Mr. Williams, who the clergyman was that sat in the pulpit with you last Sabbath ? ”

"The Rev. Mr. Tossings, madam."

"Tossings?"

"Yes."

"Tossings!" soliloquized she, "Mrs. Street, has he not been here and preached before now?"

"I do not recollect him."

"Yes," said Mr. Williams, "he preached one Sabbath before I came here."

"Oh! yes, yes," said she, "I thought so, I recollect him now. Poor creature! and where" (the company smiled) "where is he now settled?"

"He has no settled abode, I think, madam."

"Why?"

"Yes, he even told me that he had not received a call, though he had preached in a great many places, for five years or more."

"Then I think there must be something defective in him, for surely the church in R——— want a minister, or they would not disturb us. Why don't they employ a man like him now, who wants a situation, and would thank them for it all the days of his life?"

Mr. Williams smiled and said, "we can't act for them."

Said the deacon, "Tossings? I know him. He is a man of considerable talent, a great reader, a correct writer, but a poor preacher, and he has but little of that practical every day good sense, that a minister certainly needs if any body does."

Now came up, bowing and smiling, Mrs. Peters accom-

panied by her husband, and seating him and herself among the company, she said, "It is so pleasant to meet all our friends this evening, good Mr. and Mrs. Williams, precious ones, and you sir," addressing him, "so miserable, or so extremely pale and suffering, and my dear Mrs. Williams, so happy. Is it not, husband, a pleasant occasion? And then here is our excellent Deacon Hartwell. Oh! I confess myself greatly obliged and extremely gratified. Mary, my dear, come and lean on my chair, are you not fatigued?"

Esquire Peters regretted that "*business*" had kept him away from his friends so late. "But it's better late than never."

"Oh! dear, yes," said his wife. "We are all gratified to see you even at the close of the evening. And Deacon Hartwell, are we going to have the railroad, and the whistling cars through our village, or not?"

"I can't say, madam."

"I learn," said the lawyer, "this evening, that the decision is against us, and that the track will be laid through the 'Hollow.'"

"It can't be! it must not be!" said a dozen voices.

"If that's the case," said the deacon, "our society will dwindle, I fear."

"But they never can be anything over in the Hollow!" said Mrs. Littleway, with a severe lip. "What can a society of *such* materials ever grow into? Besides, that they should injure the old society is simply preposterous. Only

last week three very respectable and pious families moved into our village, and I understand that several new houses are soon to be erected."

"This is true," said Esquire Peters. "I don't see any necessity for the old society going down, but when a new village starts up so near to the old one with the advantage of water power, and a railroad, it gains very fast on the old one."

"We expect to part with about twenty persons from our church to form the new one in the Hollow," said the pastor.

"Twenty!" said Mrs. Littleway, dropping her hands into her lap, "twenty? and who—is it possible—who *can* they be?"

Mr. Williams assured her they were respectable brethren and sisters in the church, and among others, "Deacon Jeremiah Armstrong of that part of the town."

"Deacon Armstrong, too! is he, my dear sir, among the conspirators against our peace?"

Mrs. Williams was walking through the rooms arm in arm with Angeline Hartwell, when a tall and gentlemanly young man, with black hair, and whiskers neatly trimmed, and a rich, attractive countenance, met them. Mary Peters was leaning on his arm. The gentleman bowed, smiled, and passed on.

"Indeed, Angeline," said Mrs. Williams, "one cannot but admire Mr. Arrs, he is a great addition to the young society of Edgefield."

"Yes, ma'am," she replied.

"He has a very polite and gentlemanly way with him."

"Certainly he has, ma'am."

"Has he improved a good deal by his voyage and journey abroad?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"And do all the young ladies of the village admire him, eh?"

"Yes, ma'am—all but—one."

"One! and, my dear, who may she be, all but one?"

"A silly, or a sensible girl, ma'am."

"I am sure, Angeline, it is *you*! why I never knew you to 'ma'am' me so before in my life."

"Me! ma'am—I mean, ma'am—"

"Oh! do not, my dear, confuse yourself."

"Certainly not, ma'am. But of course—I—admire him. I have these five years past."

"What! so long?"

"Yes, ever since he saved me from the water."

"Oh! yes, I had forgotten that circumstance. And pray tell me now whom he admires."

"Ma'am?"

"Who does Mr. Arrs seem to admire?"

"He, ma'am?"

"Yes, my dear."

"He seems to—admire—them all—but—one."

"I wish I knew who that individual person might be," said she, looking straight and fixedly upon her young friend,

who turned her gaze upon the floor to avoid it. "All but 'one,' and that 'one' is"—

"Is 'one,'" she quickly answered, "who will tell you all, hereafter."

So saying, she slipped from her side into the midst of a circle of her young friends, and Mrs. Williams joined her husband.

* * * * *

A minister's position is rather a delicate one, after all. I am afraid that Mr. Williams will feel it to be his duty to preach against worldliness and fashion, and extravagant entertainments. There has been more than usual visiting and pleasure-seeking of late among us. Should he do so, he will be sure to make enemies of a good many, and it would be very bad to offend, among others, Esquire Peters.

John Smith says that it is a great fault, "now a days," ministers are guilty of, that "they are too easy with the great."

By the way, John, in anticipation of the growth of the "Hollow" society, and the decrease of ours, has given out, that if the railroad goes there, he will. We may now expect to lose him.

CHAPTER XXIX.

TEMPERANCE—FAULT FINDERS.

NOVEMBER 7th.—It is now officially made known, that the railroad track will be laid through the “Hollow!” We have lost it. There is great rejoicing over there, and bad feeling—some discouragement—here. The deacon looks grave, the minister perplexed, the doctor is incommunicative, the lawyer talks of an “INJUNCTION.” John Smith has gone to the Hollow with his lap-stone and work-bench! Colonel Arrs says we mustn’t contend with what’s appointed, that the best way is to make the most of it, and as for himself, he shall open a “Branch” store in the Hollow in the spring, and if there is any trade there, why he “will have a share of it.”

* * * * *

The railroad, it is said, will come within five rods of Mr. Huram’s factory, and the station will be just half a mile from our meeting house. Perhaps, after all, it is near enough!

* * * * *

December 10th.—I do not know what we shall come to,

unless something is done to settle the temperance question. There are, in our *church*, some who are not strictly abstemious; there are several such in the society. Last Sabbath Mr. Williams highly offended them by the stand he took in favor of teetotalism. He said that as the manufacture, sale, and use of ardent spirits were sinful, so must it be to furnish the means of making, drinking, or vending: as, for example, to rent a building for that avowed or known purpose. There are some among us who pass for good temperance men, who do, notwithstanding, rent their buildings for this use. They see he is right, but they don't wish to own it, because, then, they lose in character unless they cease this practice. Now, you may have noticed that men are generally very sensitive about their *apparent* character, while their *real* character seems to give them little uneasiness. Mr. Morgan having framed my barn a little "out of true," as the joiners say, which my eye, and his, detected, endeavored, by several ingenious sophisms, to convince me, and to convince himself, that it was entirely plumb! Old Richards, the gunsmith, once being with us when Mr. Morgan alluded to it, and was sure it stood bolt upright, said to him, "Well, Mr. Morgan, what's the use; *you* know, and *I* know, and *he* knows the barn leans. Now, what's the use of making *believe* it's right, when in *r'al*ity it's wrong?" So it is with these men, I fear; they say they wish well to the cause of temperance. This is their *apparent* character. But they lease grounds and buildings to persons who make no secret of manufacturing or selling intoxicating drinks. That is

their *real* character. Now they feel very much hurt when told that their works prove them insincere, or self-deceived. They labor to convince you that they are really and truly correct, while they themselves see, and everybody else sees, that they are wrong.

Says Mr. Williams, "If I have a fine store to lease, and let it to a rum-seller in preference to a temperance merchant, because he will give me twenty-five dollars more for the rent of it, than the other, my regard for temperance is to be measured by my regard for dollars and cents, not by the higher sentiment of morality, much less by that of religion."

This has offended some. They say, *he shall take that back, or we will go to the new church in the "Hollow!"* So everything ends in *the "Hollow,"* THE "HOLLOW!" I trust that Mr. Williams will have wisdom given to him, and firmness. It is a great evil that rum should influence so extensively the men of the world. God grant that it may not rule the church and the pulpit.

He also said that moderate drinkers were, perhaps, more guilty of perpetuating the sin of intemperance, and, indeed, of leading the innocent into it, than the habitual drunkards themselves. Says he,

"Who that sees a drunkard reeling, with oaths, and an insulting and foolish air, along the streets, will plunge at once into the depths of inebriation? But if Mr. A., or Mr. B., with a fair character, and a dashing, clever, gentlemanly and generous manner, says to a friend, 'Drink with me a

social glass, sir?" how many there are who will yield, and thus begin a career of sin, which, under the other influence, would, probably, have been unthought of!"

The moderate drinkers among us, I find, dislike, exceedingly, these views of the subject, and they greatly prefer that Mr. Williams would not lose his popularity in the Parish by exhibiting them.

I do not think that Mr. Williams need fear the opposition that these views on the subject have called out, for he has the truth on his side, and a large majority of the Parish may be relied on to sustain him. But I well know that some ministers have found themselves in difficulty, precisely from this cause.

* * * * *

We are not in a state of rest. What one man likes, another frequently dislikes. It is a source of real pleasure, not to say pride, to many, to most of us, that Mr. Williams enjoys, in a great degree, the favor and confidence of his brother ministers. So much so, that he is gone from us very frequently on the Sabbath on exchanges, often with ministers "well known to fame," or with his brethren in the neighboring parishes. As his judgment is very good for so young a minister, he is often called to attend the "councils" of his brethren here and there in the churches. He is also a frequent attendant at ministers social meetings, and associations. He attends the meeting of the Consociation whenever it occurs. Besides these, he is frequently called away to preach a sermon at an ordination, or installation of a

minister. He is a popular public lecturer also, and is frequently engaged to speak on topics not strictly religious, before assemblies in many of our best towns and cities.

Mr. and Mrs. Manners find great occasion to speak against him for these things.

"Why, sir," said she to me, "he is gone at least one half the time!"

"Oh! no, madam," I replied, "he is frequently absent, I grant, but he does not stay away long at a time, and he seems to me to be among us every day in the year."

"How it may seem to you on the public street, I don't know, but he is so seldom seen in our neighborhood that I imagine he has lost his way whenever I do see him; and as for the Sabbath, he has been absent during this month two in four."

"True, he has; but this was something a little rare even for him."

"I don't know," said Mr. Manners, with an ominous shake of the head, "he is gone a great many Sabbaths."

"Well, my dear sir, consider that he may be doing good to others if he is. *You* do not suppose that he is playing idle, all this time."

"No, not that I 'spose, though he undoubtedly saves a good many sermons by it."

"Fie! fie! Mr. Manners, you do not allow yourself a prejudice of this nature, I hope."

"Oh! no sir, no, it is only a simple *fact* in the case,

right enough, I 'spose. But we don't hire him to preach to others. We want him ourselves."

"True as the gospel," said his spouse. "What do we want to have our minister preaching on the Sunday over at West Edgefield (!) for? They are but a handful of people, and can't understand him; and I am sure I can't *their* minister. What do we want old Doctor Eaveswell in our pulpit for, with his sermons fifty years old, and two hours long? I think Mr. Williams' duty is to stay at home."

"He is often feeble, and it is then a relief, an unspeakable one, to exchange."

"When the man is sick, he had better be at home than away," said Mr. Manners.

"Perhaps, sir, he is well on the Sabbath, but has been too feeble to write his sermons through the week."

"That's something like a doctor having more riding and business on Sunday than on other days," said she.

"I cannot think," said I, "that our Pastor is an idle man, or a deceiver."

"No, no," said he, "but would it not be for the good of our society, and tend to keep us together, if he were more at home—as a general thing?"

"I can't say, I think it would, nor will I admit that he is gone more frequently than he ought to be."

"Well, *others* think differently about it as well as we."

"I don't think there are five persons in the Parish that care one sixpence about it," said I, with a little heat.

"—John Smith—"

“John Smith is not worth minding, *and you know it*; besides, he has packed himself off. What have we to do with him, or he with us?”

“Well, the ‘Hollow’ people say he is dissatisfied, and is preparing to leave us.”

“If he is dissatisfied,” said Mrs. Manners, “why not go away at once, and not take underhanded means about it?”

“I declare,” said I, “you have got yourselves into a singular state of mind. It now seems that you are bitterly opposed to his absence a single Sabbath, or week-day.”

“—No, no, to so many Sabbaths and other times—”

“It matters not; you magnify his absences till they amount, in your view, to an offence against his own society; you overlook the comity of ministerial fellowship, the necessity also of councils, the desirableness of lectures; the gifts of our pastor in the public estimation. It is no satisfaction to *you* that he is helpful to somebody else, and that he can *do* good as well as *get* good, by occasionally going abroad—”

“—Not ‘occasionally,’ but so much—”

“—By going abroad, and you listen to what the opposing society in the ‘Hollow’ have to say, which is rank infidelity to your own society, and you have allowed this prejudice so to blind your minds, and sour your hearts, that you suspect him of a design to leave us, and advise him, if he is dissatisfied, to go. Now look at it. You don’t care whether he goes or stays; you have taken up a prejudice, and feed on it night and day. Were you to talk with everybody as

you have with me, you would cause a great many improper feelings against him, and awaken a storm without his knowing it. Now, my advice to you is to go and see *him*, and tell him, just as you have me, what you think of him."

"Oh! no sir; not for the world! do you think," said she, "that I don't love my minister? Why, sir, I think he is a perfect paragon of a minister, and wouldn't exchange him for his weight in gold. *I* hav'nt a bit of prejudice."

"It's *only*," said he, "*this one* LITTLE MATTER of *being gone too much!*"

"Oh! you self-deceived and foolish ones," said I, "if you don't stop, right where you are, and say no more about this, you may be guilty of poisoning the peace of the man you pretend to love so much, and of stirring up a Parish fever that you can never allay."

They both entreated me to hold, and promised they would say no more about it.

After they were gone, I felt ready to fall down on my knees and thank God, that by his good providence they had been directed to me, rather than to many I could think of, and especially that in their zeal they had not gone and complained to the Pastor! What bigotry! what selfishness! what contracted ideas did they evince in their interview with me on this point? It is true that I generally prefer to hear my own Pastor preach; but I am by no means indisposed to hear others. It is a pleasure to cultivate an acquaintance with the ministers around us, and to listen to *their* views of gospel truth. And I know that our Pastor

needs this relief, and that it has a positive influence to enlarge his own views of truth, to relax a little from *time to time* in his studies. Some ministers may think that they can stay at home 'year in and year out' without once exchanging; nay, that they can write two fresh and rich sermons every week, without any weakness or failure in the thought or argument,—*their people*, however, know they cannot.

There are a great many remarks made about ministers that I sincerely rejoice they do not hear, because it is often true, that they who make them do not really entertain the opinions their words seem to express.

CHAPTER XXX.

MARRIAGES—TROUBLES IN THE TOWN.

JANUARY 4th.—How many beautiful surprises meet us in this world from day to day. When the contemplated marriage of Henry Arrs and Angelina Hartwell was announced last Sabbath from the pulpit, it was the first intelligence I had ever received of an engagement between them. Now it comes out, that they have been actually engaged, or as good as engaged, for more than two years! I was, of course, prepared to hear the publishment of my own son Robert, and Miss Esther Peters, but the other took me entirely by surprise.

What a gala holiday have these two marriages given to our village! That no one might complain of being left out of the number invited to the wedding, both of the marriages were solemnized at the church on the morning of New Year's day. And oh! what a crowd of persons, old and young, were there.

Mr. Williams was very short in the exercises, much to the relief of the parties, I am told, though some of the old people thought he might as well have taken more time, and have given them some good advice.

"Pshaw!" said Mr. Williams, "they don't want any advice—they want to be married."

"Throughout the day and evening, there were a great many calls upon them, at the houses of both the brides' parents, and most splendid entertainments were prepared, and freely dispensed among all the gay and cheerful visitants.

Robert continues to drive on his business in the city, and is making heavier contracts every day. As yet, he seems to be prospered. I felt it my duty to give him some advice, however, and to warn him against a dark day. He thanked me for my counsels and admonitions, and said that my interest in his welfare was never forgotten, how much-soever immersed in speculations he might be. He assured me that his affairs were moving on well, and that he expected to get rich very soon.

"Yes, father," says he, "put me down for half a million of dollars in ten or fifteen years."

"Oh! Robert, Robert!" said I, "how blithely you talk of MILLIONS!"

"Well, father," said he, "what's a million now a days? Once, a *millionaire* was a great man in the world. Now-a-days he's but a matter of course!"

"Oh, my son, my son, how rash you are—how giddy with the thoughts of a MILLION!"

"Ha! ha! ha! father. Why look here. I care no more about it, than you do about your corn yield—not a whit. But it seems to be my nature, or good hit, or providence,

or something else, to go into the business largely, so I just let fortune lead on and I follow. Father, father! don't be worried, ha! ha! Why, my dear sir, I sleep as soundly now as I ever slept when a boy."

He is an affectionate and engaging child. I hope that he will not be called to pass through the deep waters of trial and disappointment.

Henry Arrs is expected to take charge of the new store in the Hollow. Whether he will reside there or in the village, I do not at present know.

* * * * *

April.—The spring has come. May is just at hand. One can but rejoice to welcome it. The past winter has been rather severe, but is already nearly forgotten in the bright glories of April. What a wonderful transformation has taken place already at the Hollow. I have been there to-day. Three new church edifices are now in the process of erection there, four or five new stores, railroad house and station, and they say at least thirty dwelling houses. The contractors for the railroad are there at work with fifty men. The teams drawing sand and stones are all in motion. Everybody is hard at work, and every voice is keyed up to the highest point. The rattling machinery, the noise of escaping steam, the ringing of factory bells, the rushing here and there of the busy citizens, cause one unfeigned feeling and expressions of wonder. They contrast singularly enough with the quiet, staid, unalterable order of things in our village. It really seems that they have now

the start of us, that we shall soon see them in the front rank of influence in this vicinity of towns! How strange is this! Ten years ago, the whole of that valley could have been purchased for five dollars an acre, and now, you can hardly buy a foot for five dollars! We begin, in the village, to apprehend that our YOUNG PEOPLE will leave us, and be drawn by the promises of business and money-making, into the society at the Hollow. Such has been the case in many other communities, and the comparative silence, the quiet, the dulness, that reigns in our own beautiful and still-prominent village, gives us some intimation of what we may expect. We have parted with twenty of our brethren to help form the new church in the Hollow. This we have long expected. We have separated, for the most part, in kindness to each other.

In common with our pastor, the church and society have been much distressed the past winter and spring, by the starting up among us of an organized band of COME-OUTERS. There are six or seven families that have been, the whole winter long, a source of constant annoyance to us. Mr. Williams has seen them, committee after committee visited them, and endeavored to reason with them, but they would not listen. They charge us with being a *pro-slavery* church, and the American Board, which we help sustain, a *pro-slavery* corporation. They claim the right to *go out* of the church without leave or license, because, as we fellowship with SIN, they are not "holden to us." They wish us to "declare off" from the Board, and give our contributions

elsewhere; and separate from all the neighboring churches that will not forthwith, by a special act, renounce fellowship with the slaveholding Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. They say we must have no fellowship, express or implied, with ministers or lay members of the slaveholding churches. We do not see any necessity for all this bluster. There are no slaveholders among us. We fear not the arrival of any. We have confidence in the American Board, that it will do all in its power to establish pure gospel missions, and to correct all wrong in the mission churches at the earliest practicable moment. We have asked them, and entreated them to be calm, and to continue in fellowship with us. They have, on the contrary, deliberately *renounced us, at last*, as heretical. They have declared us little better than a slaveholding church, and our minister as under the influence of the slaveocracy at the south. They say, that while we do not repent, they can neither commune with us, nor take our letters of recommendation; that the least they can do is to shake off the dust of their feet, and go from us. Accordingly, they have sent in a long paper of accusations, and resolutions, in which, as though acting in accordance with the wishes of the Lord, they formally consign us over to the powers of evil, and declare themselves forever absolved from all obligations to walk with us in the faith and order of the gospel!

Poor and deluded brethren! Where will they go; what church in fellowship with us, can receive them in good faith, what will become of *them* if they remain out of the fold!

This matter has distressed us beyond measure. It has been one of the items of attention all through the winter and spring. That it will weaken our society somewhat, we do not doubt, for among the disaffected, are one or two families of influence and wealth.

* * * * * *

We are distressed at the failure of Marcus Street & Son! They have met, it is said, with some heavy losses abroad, and have been compelled to make an assignment! This is a heavy blow to our village, a deplorable event so far as the society is concerned. We hope, however, they will not be compelled to wind up, although it is said they have been obliged to discharge forty of their hands! These men will find employment, for the most part, in the *Hollow*!

Mr. and Mrs. Williams feel deeply for these friends. Between Mrs. Street and Mrs. Williams there has ever existed a cordiality resembling that of sisters. Their tastes were similar, their reading, their intelligence, their good nature, their activity much the same, or so much as to endear them greatly to one another. Mr. Street has been as much relied on in our society to keep everything straight, as Deacon Hartwell himself.

It cannot be doubted that our society is much weaker now than it was even one year ago. Still we do not despair of it. We may not occupy the same position of ease, opulence, and influence as formerly, but I trust we shall not at once lose everything.

Mr. Williams has a cough this spring, and looks feeble. We have earnestly entreated him to spare himself.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SCANDALOUS PROCEEDINGS AT THE HOLLOW—DEBT—MR. WILLIAMS—
OTHER CLERGYMEN—APPEAL.

WE have supposed that our neighbors of the Hollow, and our brethren of the new church there, pleased with their own prosperity, and strong in numbers and wealth, would be willing that we, who seem destined to enjoy less of what they so much boast, should be allowed to possess in peace our own. But we had reckoned on this without sufficient grounds. They seem indisposed to lose any advantage which they have gained, and the selfish principle, even though they are on the rising tide of fortune, is plainly at work among them, to secure their own ends.

It is but a short time ago that the new church in that place was organized. Yet such is the vigor of the new body, such the confidence of all the society, that we see them erecting a large and convenient church edifice, and procuring the ablest divines from Sabbath to Sabbath that can be found unemployed. But what I feel particularly called on to notice and to rebuke, is an attempt on their part to call our minister away from us! They know that

we are deeply interested in him ; that we have nursed him as a child beloved ; that we have followed him as a spiritual guide ; that we have defended him when in trouble or danger ; that we have need of him as our shepherd ; that we have not neglected and cast him off in his affliction, but supported, cheered and honored him. They know our trials before of this nature, and how bitterly we resented the endeavor of the church in R—— to rob us of a pastor beloved. They are not compelled to do this, because there are no good ministers who are unemployed and wish for a settlement ; they have the stated ordinances of the gospel administered to them every Sabbath, but notwithstanding, they have had the effrontery to appoint a committee consisting of old Mr. Hurams, Deacon J. Armstrong and Esquire Stratton, the Representative, to invite Mr. Williams to take the charge of their church and society. I mention this without heat. I write it down calmly, because it is too barefaced and unjust to succeed ; and further, it is such a betrayal of childish vanity, that I will not suffer it to move me. I know, however, that many of our society have resented it, and that it has already alienated a good many who were before the best of friends. I know of nothing more directly calculated to wound the feelings and call out resentment than such a course of proceeding. There is nothing very reprehensible in a society or church expressing its approbation of a talented and useful minister of another society. I know not that it should be censured as a violation of good fellowship and faith even to appoint a committee to inquire

if an existing relation between a pastor and people continued to be an object of desire, or if it may not be dissolved. But the case is altered when a church and society secretly pass a vote to call a minister from his people without consulting other interests than their own, and make every effort in their power to carry it. The people in the Hollow did this. They offered to give Mr. Williams eight hundred dollars a year and his rent, besides three months' absence immediately to recover his strength. We considered it a mean and base attempt to build themselves up at our expense, and left them to do as they could. Mr. Williams saw through the scheme very quickly. We were not disappointed in the course which he pursued. He very kindly, though decidedly, refused their offers. He thought it strange, and we did, that they should think of his acceptance of the offer in his present state of health. Some have said that they meant by it to add insult to sufferings, but of this I acquit them.

* * * * *

We find ourselves this spring eight hundred dollars in debt! We have made, during the last few years, the greatest exertions to overcome embarrassments and to put our ecclesiastical matters on a good footing, but the loss of our church, the many expenses of that period, raising of salaries, the failure of a prominent man, and the rivalry of the Hollow, have thrown us in arrears. It is an unfortunate thing for us, and it happens when our minister is feeble, and the other clergymen of the place are strong. I confess that

I do not look on the future with as bright hopes as formerly. The young men of the place all leave us for the manufacturing villages, and for the cities. We have not now that element of prosperity among us. The church is losing ground in point of numbers, the society in wealth. Still we are not broken up. I trust we shall not be. But how can we pay the debt?

May 25th.—Mr. Williams does not preach. He is fearful that his health is permanently injured. His society manifest the deepest concern in his behalf. They have implored him to spare himself, and to go anywhere, to do anything for a time, to contribute to his relief. He is greatly touched by their kindness and ardent affection. Especially by an offer on the part of the society to release him from his duties to the Parish for six months, and still to pay him his salary. He feels this the more because he sees that our circumstances are somewhat embarrassed.

Mr. Williams owes no small share of his popularity and usefulness among us to his strong practical good sense. His views of things correspond with life as it is, and while he sees in society much to deplore, and much calculated to excite the mind, and to try the patience, he is not blinded to the good that really exists, nor discouraged at events that cast a dark shadow around them. He has not asked a dismission because the church piety was at a low ebb, and this and that man in the society may have been at variance, or because Mr. Such-an-one complained that he held too

strenuously to election, or human depravity. He has not presented request on request for the raising of his salary, although it has never been a large one. He has not made his own life bitter by imaginings of evil to come, and regrets that providence should have placed him in this comparatively small Parish when his talents might have commanded one of the first in the country. I do not recollect that he has ever asked for more salary, or preached about his debts, or expressed a desire to leave us. He has doubtless thought of his salary, thought of his debts, thought of other societies, thought of his trials, otherwise we should suppose him wanting in human sensibilities. But he has had the patience, confidence, and *practical good sense* to keep these thoughts to himself, and to avoid disturbing and discouraging the hearts of the people by their earnest and repeated presentation.

The Rev. Mr. Carlile of Justingsville parish, seems to think or care very little for anything but his salary. He frequently informs his people that it is too small for his comfort, and altogether inadequate to enable him to pay his debts; that he deems it a sacred duty to accept of the first invitation that he may receive from a rich society, no matter what it is, or where it may be, that will secure him better pay. He is generally looking on the dark side of things, and says that he shall soon die unless his circumstances are easier, and that his wife and children will be left penniless in the world. * * * I can see no good to come from this.

There are a good many ministers who seem to regard the salary of a given parish the *sine quâ non* to their settlement in it. A united vote of the parish to call them, a people needing their services and willing to make great sacrifices to secure them, are not the motive power. "No, the salary is too small!" "We can't live on it!" (that is, "we can't live as we have thought of living, and determined to live.")

In beautiful contrast with this, let me mention the course of the Rev. Mr. —, to which my attention was recently called by an article in the newspaper. He, it seems, received simultaneously a call from the rich church in —, with the offer of twelve hundred dollars a year salary, and one from the poor church in C—, with the salary of four hundred dollars a year. He accepted the latter, saying, "the rich church will probably find itself a more willing pastor than the poor one." Such a principle and course of conduct the gospel of Jesus Christ everywhere inculcates. The blessings of heaven fall richly on him who takes the oversight of God's poor people "not *for* filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

* * * * *

Still, *brothers* of the church, and parishes of our land of Sabbath sanctuaries and Bibles, let us do all that lies in our power to support those who labor among us in the work of the gospel, ever holding it true that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Let it not be said of us at the last, that we were wanting in kindness and every

duty to those who for Christ's sake denied themselves to break unto us the bread of life. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, *my brethren*, ye have done it unto ME." It will be far better in the day of just reckoning before God, to have had no gospel, than to have appropriated it to ourselves below its value, that we might, though unjust to others, be the more indulgent to ourselves !

CHAPTER XXXII.

JOURNAL CONTINUED—PASTOR FEEBLE—DEACON GONE!

JUNE.—The contractors for this section of the railroad have failed! They have absconded, leaving several thousands of dollars due to workmen, merchants and others. The men on the road have had a great gathering and a riot, in which they were with difficulty restrained from burning up the works of the company. An adjustment of their claims is promised them, and they will, after that, again commence work.

We are glad, under these circumstances, to be a little removed from the scene. Our quiet village seems a paradise to the bedlam uproar of the Hollow!

Mr. Williams is a little easier as to his health, but is not able to preach. The society feel deeply for him, and nearly every day some one calls and rides out with him.

* * * * *

June 15th.—The bolts of heaven fly as they are ordained. When God with rebukes doth chasten man for his folly, his glory, etc.

We now feel our weakness, our dependence, our great

and irremediable loss. *Deacon Hartwell* is no more! He expired last evening after a sickness of only two days. Something resembling a paralytic shock deprived him of strength early in the evening when attacked, and he was found on the floor in a deplorable state of insensibility, by his family. It was at first thought he would immediately expire, but he did not, and in the morning his recollection returned and he was able to speak to his friends. He assured them that his hour had come, and that he felt no reluctance to meet it. He had for years trusted all to the blood of his Saviour, and felt entirely resigned to the will of God. He commended his afflicted wife to the care of her Redeemer, and bade his family be kind to her as long as she lived. He had made such a disposition of his property as would secure it to his family and the church of Christ, so that his mind was easy on that point. He affectionately bade Jonas go on in the good work of studying for the gospel ministry, and commended him, in one of his warmest prayers, to the mercy of God. Angeline was present, and received his dying affectionate farewell. He called her "*his angel*." Wilder was sensibly affected, and could hardly endure the scene. Mr. Williams continued by him night and day, as he had strength, till his spirit departed, and had the joy of hearing him say repeatedly, "My dear, and beloved Pastor, I hope to meet you in the future world. You have been a great comfort to me in this. The Lord reward you; he will. Preach the word—be in-

stant in season—out of season,—reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

He finally sank away in a state of insensibility to pain, although not wholly forgetful of his condition, and breathing a faint prayer, “come Lord Jesus—” left this world for a better.

We knew not how to spare him—and yet we cannot, we would not recall him to the earth. He has been indeed a pillar in this church of Christ. A strong and a good man in Israel has fallen. Deacon Hartwell had his faults; he had his enemies. But faults are forgotten in the memory of his virtues, and enmities perish in the day of death. I know that God can sustain his own cause, even making the weakness of man to manifest his own great power whenever it best suits him. But we have so long relied on the deacon for advice, and pecuniary assistance, that we now feel our helplessness. It is true we have recently had an addition of ten or twelve persons to our society, and among them there are one or two active young men of piety and intelligence. But what one man, or ten men, can make good to us our loss in the departure of Deacon Hartwell?

Mr. Williams, I know, will feel this loss in a most sensible manner. Deacon Hartwell was, in truth, his right hand man, and ever ready to help, and to advise, and to encourage him. Almost every week they have met and prayed together, or conversed on the state of the church and society, and formed together, and executed their plans for the promotion of religion among us. He has been so familiar

with no one else in the church or society. He will mourn for him as one mourneth for a father.

The church and society are deeply moved at the intelligence of their loss. A very great funeral of true mourners will gather together around his grave.

Many fears are expressed for Mrs. Hartwell, lest she should soon follow him to the grave. It is, indeed, as the breaking of the staff on which she has leaned for nearly fifty years, and she must feel her weakness and desolate condition. May the Lord comfort and support her.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TRIALS—SUPPORT OF PASTORS.

WHY is it that these trials are appointed unto us, unless it be for our good? Certainly they are not needed to secure in us a greater love of the world, and devotion to the things that perish with the using; they have neither this tendency nor effect, but they lead us to reflection, to penitence, to a newness of life, in earnest endeavors after new obedience to God. Many, many have been the trials of our society during the last twenty years. I look back upon them, and my heart aches over the scenes that meet my attention. We have labored to build up Zion. We have denied ourselves ease, and time, and money. We have worked, as it were, day and night, to carry forward the Parish, and to make our valley vocal with the praises of our God. And yet we have been constantly tried—daily and hourly visited from on high. I would not complain. I but speak of the past to humble me more, and to show forth the blessing and sustaining hand of God among his people. But, surely, I may remember all the way of travail by which we have come up to this present hour. We have

borne the burden and heat of many a day, and have felt, many a time, the iron of disappointment go down into the soul. There are, it may be, those who think we have, as a Parish, no burdens or distracting cares, and that all the anxiety and burden of the society and church rest on our beloved pastor and his estimable lady. I know that they sorrow deeply over the declension of religion among us, and that they have their trials, and hours of despondency over this and that report, or occurrence. But the pastor who has an affectionate people around him, is daily enjoying the support of an hundred family altars, and closets. He has a home in every house of his Parish, a people glad to hear the Word from his lips, jealous of his good name, and ready at any moment to vindicate his character if aspersed. Are his family ill, how many little attentions, from this one and that, are immediately tendered. Can any one do something to relieve him, it is accomplished without money, and without price. Does he need *time* to pay that which he owes, no man enjoys a better credit, no man is more kindly waited on. Where is the citizen, be he the judge, the lordly rich, the eminent statesman, even be he the President himself, who is more deferentially regarded, more courteously treated? Where is *the man* whose official duty is more influential, who accomplishes more for his species? There are peculiar trials. There are disheartening circumstances often. But there are redeeming mercies and features. I am one who cannot regard the ministry other than with the highest respect. At the same time I do not join

loudly in the cry against the Christian congregations and Parishes of our country, accusing them of ingratitude, and coldness, and selfishness, and a want of regard and feeling for their pastors. I would not for a moment defend the single Parish guilty of these charges, and I would not accept the wholesale accusations against them, that perhaps for plunder, or out of some personal revenge, it has occasionally pleased some to utter to the world. So far as my knowledge goes, especially here in New England, and among all orders of Christians, the ministry has been highly honored and faithfully supported. I will not say that in every instance the salary of ministers has been sufficiently large to meet the necessary charges of life, but that, usually, a large and equitable compensation has been allowed them; and, in many instances, as fast as circumstances made it necessary and possible to the people, the salary has been cheerfully increased. And yet there has been, I know, occasionally much suffering. This is undenied, and undeniable. But suffering in this best and holiest of all labors, must be expected—the *sufferings also*, complained of! Is it *ours* to say what, and how great sufferings we will bear for Christ, and the good of souls? Shall we make it an insurmountable hinderance to our usefulness, that A, B, and C, in our Parishes, refuse to pay us for our labors; or that they speak reproachfully, and wound our sensitiveness. But Paul, in preaching the same gospel, was often placed in peril of liberty and life. He was beaten with rods. He was confined in dungeons. He was cruelly devoured by

wild beasts in the Amphitheatre at Rome. OUR LORD had not where to lay his head! Shall the servant be greater than his Master? Are his disciples to complain, and to make the question all important, what shall I eat, or what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed?

Our own affluent and numerous society has seen the day of small things. The time has been, in our past history, when we paid but *thirty pounds* a year for the preaching of the gospel. Nay, when we were glad to hear a sermon once in three Sabbaths. Those were days when the servant of God, as he went from one settlement to another, passed often through an ambuscade of Indians, and not unfrequently was slain. In those days, the people took their arms with them to the house of God, and part of the congregation kept watch, as the other part engaged in worship. Men tilling the earth were as targets for the arrows and bullets of the wily savage. Still the word of God was not bound, nor was the seed of the gospel withheld, and in due time that which "was sown in weakness, was raised in power."

In all new settlements there must be more or less suffering, more or less deprivation of comforts and conveniences. And so in many of the old and dull towns, where there is little business, thrift, or life, the people will be somewhat dilatory in paying their pastors, and unwilling to increase a salary which they already reckon too great for their means. They will, many of them, be to their pastor what they are to themselves, and to one another, cold and unsocial. If he

remains among them, it must be his effort to arouse their better natures, and awaken in them some degree of self-respect and confidence, stimulating them to activity, rather than allowing their backwardness, and by his complainings affording them new cause for despondency, envy, and even irritation.

Many a pastor finds it difficult to support himself and family on a salary of four hundred or five hundred dollars a year. An equal number find it difficult to support themselves on six hundred or seven hundred a year, and still a large number on eight and nine hundred—and so we may go on to fifteen hundred. The Rev. Mr. M—— removed from a large and flourishing society in the country, where he received a salary of eight hundred dollars a year, to one of our large cities, where he was paid fifteen hundred. It cost him out of this, for his house rent alone, six hundred dollars, and the house he occupied was not one of the best or most desirable at that. How much better off in respect of funds was he now, with fifteen hundred dollars, than before with eight?

If the gospel is to be preached in the new settlements, in the back towns, in the old and dull Parishes, ministers must not expect to receive large salaries, as a general thing. They must strive to bring their expenditures within a smaller compass than their own desires had suggested, and if driven to it, they must be content, as was Paul, that their own hands should minister to their necessities. With strict economy, care and attention, and an humble, habitual de-

pendence on God, most of our country pastors will find themselves comfortable in their Parishes, supported in their trials, useful to the church of Christ, and the souls of dying men, and becoming daily more and more ready to leave the earth, for the bliss and glory of heaven.

Moreover, the small-salaried ministers have, as a general rule, little work to do, compared with what their brethren, with larger salaries, are called to. A large church and society of six or eight hundred or a thousand souls, needs a good deal of oversight, unremitting daily, hourly attention. Some of our city pastors have a funeral to attend—almost every day,—certainly, on an average every week. A large number of their society is all the while on the sick list; and they are subject to interminable calls and interruptions during the week. I have known one talented Doctor of Divinity, whose sermons were frequently written in the night, after the city had gone to rest! And frequently both of them Saturday night!

The obligation increases with privilege. If it is a privilege to live in a large town or city, then pay for it in hard work! If it is a privilege to be a Doctor of Divinity, pay for it by great efforts! If it is a privilege to be a GREAT man anywhere, the privilege and the cost go together. If you have received much, of you much will be required.

The plain, and simple-hearted minister of Uplandville, lying north of this place, Mr. Scott, called on me the other day. He expressed a great thankfulness to God for permitting him to live all his days in so quiet a village as Up-

landville, among a pious, temperate, industrious people, who were all within two miles of each other, and who, apparently, were as cordial in their feelings towards him then, as they had been at any previous time of his settlement among them. He said that he was not conscious of having ever desired to leave them. He loved the very rocks and streams of the town; the forests were frequently trodden by him in paths that were as familiar as his own garden walks. He knew everybody's house as far as he could see it. He could tell a stranger's equipage from that of any of the town's people, though he saw it from the brow of a hill a long distance off. He was perfectly familiar with every countenance in his Parish. Every child's name he knew. The wagons and carriages, horses, and even ox teams, he knew them all. Everything was familiar to him, beloved by him, and he had no desire, although his salary was but four hundred dollars a year, to change the place of his residence. From the cares, the labors, and responsibilities of large, overgrown, and especially *city* churches, his whole nature shrank with trembling. He said, that small as his Parish was, he often thought it was as large as he was prepared to render an account of to the JUDGE!

On the contrary, the Rev. Rodolphus Kechall, of Ham, a town out west of us, recently assured me, that his life was made unhappy because he had never received a call to a larger church and society than that of Ham. He complained bitterly against the allotment of Providence in his case, and said that he had been waiting anxiously for more

than five years for an invitation to a larger society, where his talents might be brought out. He considered himself able to edify any congregation in the country, and would not object to a responsible position in the city. He "perfectly envied city ministers," and said that it had been the hope of his life so far, to have the charge of a city pulpit before he died.

"As yet, however," said he, "it looks dark; I have never received the first call to another place. I am at Ham, and 'Ham's minister I'm like to be.'"

I suggested, in order to tranquillize him, and afford him still new ground of hope in such an unpleasant condition, that it might be there were many churches that would most gladly avail themselves of his talents and labors, if they were once acquainted with his desire to make an exchange of place—that, perhaps, the vacant churches around supposed him too useful and necessary to Ham, to even think of interrupting the connection.

But he assured me that this could not be, "for," said he, "on all convenient occasions, as now, I have freely conversed with gentlemen of other towns, and given them a full and faithful description of my feelings. Moreover, I have not written my sermons for Ham, but for larger and more intelligent audiences, and I deliver them on the Sabbath as if I were speaking to a congregation of a thousand souls. I expect, you see, to have occasion to use my talents in an appropriate sphere by-and-by. And, besides, I exchange as often as I can with ministers who preach in large

houses, to accustom myself to the circumstances I am looking for."

I ventured to inquire, if his labors seemed "to be blest among the people of Ham?"

"Not exactly blessed," said he, "and yet the people have a great idea of me."

It occurred to me to advise him to labor for his own people. I hinted this to him in the kindest manner, for he is a man that cannot bear contradiction. I even said in his hearing, "He that is faithful over a few things, I will make him ruler over many."

He replied that the people of Ham were satisfied with what he did for them, and frequently remarked, that if they did "as well as he preached, they should come off well at last."

I hinted at humility, but he declared that he had been humble long enough already, and that he now intended to hold up his head, and push for his ideal.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HOW THE SALARY MAY BE RAISED—MR. BROWN.

THIS morning I called at Esquire Peters's office, and sat an hour or two with him, engaged in profitable conversation. He is of the opinion that our society will revive from its present depression after a time, and that the village will always enjoy the favorable attention of gentlemen who wish for quiet and beautiful residences. Moreover he says, that if we desire it, we can easily connect the village with the railroad by a branch section. "But," said he, "it is my opinion that the railroad is near enough to us. Let us wait patiently for a time, and see how affairs will then appear."

I answered that the railroad mania had ceased much to affect me, as I was confident the two villages would soon connect with each other, and that the central part of the business would be found ultimately near the upper station, and consequently as near to us as them. "At present," said I, "we have the numbers and means sufficient to the support of the society. My anxiety is chiefly concerning the health of the Pastor."

"True, that is a grave matter. I fear that his constitu-

tion, never the most robust, is too much broken to allow the hope of long enjoying his services."

"He is evidently suffering by his continued efforts in the pulpit. Do you not think that we should converse with him directly on the point of suspending his labors."

"He must be advised and assisted. In my judgment, he ought to go this spring to Europe, and try the benefit of the voyage, and the scenes of the old countries."

"That is precisely my own opinion, sir, and I find it is beginning to be talked of among our ladies, and by the young people of the parish."

"Ah?"

"Yes, and Doctor Alexander shakes his head over him."

"Well, I think we must put this thing along; the fact is, that Mr. Williams ought not to preach again for a year. If he stops now, and takes this voyage, it may reinstate him in health, as we have seen that it did in the case of Henry Arrs, and so our Parish yet may enjoy for a reasonable period his labors."

I fully approved of this, and we determined that the thing should have an immediate attention.

While we were thus engaged, who should happen in but the Rev. Mr. Brown, the worthy and beloved minister of Hunting. Mr. Brown is beloved for his kind, amiable and excellent character. He is a man of sterling worth, being a good and faithful Christian minister, a ripe scholar, a perfect gentleman. His dress is after the perfect model of his profession, and exceedingly tasteful and becoming. His

white cravat is adjusted with care, and confined with a perfect knot in front. His hat is always neatly brushed ; his coat, vest and pants, seem as though fresh from his bureau ; his boots are polished like mirrors, his gloves are handsome kid, and his staff is tipped with silver. Yet is there nothing extravagant in this, or expensive beyond what others allow themselves with vastly less good taste and arrangement. You never look at him to remark the costliness of his dress, but to experience a pleasure at the extremely neat and appropriate style of his attire. Seen anywhere, as well by his external appearance as by his deportment, he is always known as a clergyman ; and thus to be known, he seems to suppose is neither honor nor disgrace, but merely a propriety.

Yet Mr. Brown has an occasional fit of despondency, arising, as I think, from a nice sense of honor in regard to all his engagements. And when he came into the office this morning, it was evident that he was suffering somewhat from an attack of his old enemy. When the customary salutations were gone over, and some few remarks on other subjects offered, he turned to Esquire Peters and said, "If it would not be troubling you too much, I should like to advise with you a little in respect to my own private affairs."

"I am quite at leisure, sir," replied the lawyer, "and I am happy that I can devote the hour to your society and conversation."

When I arose to leave, Mr. Brown would by no means

consent to it, and assured me that my presence would be a relief instead of any embarrassment ; so I remained.

Said he, "I find myself in something of a dilemma, and can hardly deliver myself from it. I am embarrassed with some debts in Hunting in consequence of the small salary that I receive, yet am attached to the place and personally desire to remain there. Then, on the other hand, I have an opportunity to settle in the Parish of Montrose on a salary of five hundred dollars, which seems to indicate the path of duty. Between duty and inclination—ought I to hesitate?"

"Duty and inclination," he replied, "become one in the good man's career."

"Yes, sir, but there is first to be settled where the duty lies."

"True, sir, your duty is but a particular one, perhaps, in respect to Montrose ; it may be general in as far as your present position is concerned."

"I should have no question as to the duty of remaining where I now am, provided I could see any way to liberate myself from my embarrassments."

"Then you desire a larger salary, in order to pay your debts?"

"Precisely that, sir."

"Well, the new salary that will support a minister, and enable him to pay up arrearages, must be considerable more than the old."

"In this case it will be one hundred dollars a year more."

"Not enough, sir."

"No?"

"Not enough."

"I have thought that I could appropriate the excess, *i. e.* the one hundred dollars yearly, to my debts till they were paid; and live as now, on the four hundred."

"But you don't live on the 'four hundred.' You have made a debt."

"True, but I am now rigidly economizing, and contrive to live on the salary."

"You can't as well economize on more, as on less."

"How so?"

"Because the temptation to spend money is greater. You may set it down as a truth, that if you receive a salary of five hundred dollars a year, instead of four hundred, that you will be under the temptation, and will yield to it, to buy just so many more articles of living, and spend just so many more dollars of the salary, as there are dollars added. You form, with increasing prosperity, enlarged desires and plans. When you, therefore, sum up the year's income and expenditures, you will find yourself as poor as before."

Mr. Brown did not "precisely allow the reasoning."

"Yes; for you can but just live on any salary that you can honestly obtain in the ministry; *especially* above six hundred or seven hundred dollars a year. If you are an eight hundred or a ten hundred dollars minister, your rent is expected to be greater, your servants to cost more, your carpets, your whole furniture, your library, all are to be cor-

respondingly expensive. The people expect it. They give the salary to live on, not to hoard in the banks or to use in speculations. And the minister who enjoys a large salary thinks that he must of course make the tour of Europe at least once in his life time. He must journey from 'Maine to Georgia.' He must be everywhere. He must own a fine carriage, a noble horse—not a plain carriage, or common horse. His pride is up. He must purchase every new book, subscribe for every new magazine, and his family be indulged in all their wishes. There is no end to his expenses. And where one minister with a thousand dollars salary lays up money, there are five who do not. There are more who save something for the future on a salary of four hundred dollars a year."

Mr. Brown thought as a general thing, however, they were "deeply in debt."

"Granted that many are so," returned Esquire Peters, "but as the greater proportion of ministers are of the poorly-paid class, we must look for many, the most instances of embarrassment, among them, and yet the fact remains as I have stated it. And besides this, I do not allow that they are, as 'general thing, deeply in debt.' No sir, comparatively few of them are so. They are careful, conscientious, frugal, *afraid of debts*. And now I will mention to you the case of an excellent man in the ministry, that of the Rev. Mr. Daniels. He is at present in rather feeble health, but has the comfort of a very pleasant home, which he owns. He was always an acceptable, though by no

means an extravagantly rich and showy preacher, but a plain, straight-forward, sound divine. He lived well, and educated his children respectably. In his old age, retired mostly from professional labor, he enjoys a little property that he has saved in the course of his ministry. I think it is about three thousand dollars. But, if you will believe me, he has never had over five hundred dollars salary, and usually but about four hundred."

Mr. Brown replied, "His case is a very interesting one. I will venture to inquire if he had a large family, if he was not a strong healthy man, and his wife much of a manager in worldly affairs?"

"His family was never a large one, it is true; but death, *which always costs something*, made it small. He was never an able-bodied, rugged man, but rather the reverse; and was always compelled to be careful of his health; and Mrs. Daniels, although an excellent housewife, and greatly beloved by all her acquaintances, was a person of slender constitution."

"Then I think," said Mr. Brown, with a smile, "he must have had very good neighbors and devoted friends."

"He had a great many friends, sir. But, like the rest of us, he occasionally fell into the hands of sharpers."

"Indeed! And did he lose money by them?"

"Not a great amount at any one time, but he had some annoyances and hard bargains, every now and then, like the rest of the world. For instance: He bought a 'famous' cow of John Bakeman—so *John* called it. She was large,

had a fine appearance, and looked like one of the best of milch-cows. That was what Mr. Daniels wanted—that was what Bakeman sold her for. As for tricks, defects, and such like, he ‘didn’t know of any worth mentioning, excepting this, that as she grazed on the hill side, and down by the river, among the briars, the bag was apt to get scratched and sore, causing her, *sometimes, to kick a little.*’ As for butter, she was ‘ten-pounds-a-week,’ at that; but as his family was large, they drank up, and used in baking, all the milk, making no account whatever of the cream. Yet on one occasion, ‘he remembered that his wife made six pounds of butter from a week’s cream—or so, while the children took as much milk as they wanted.”

“Fine recommendation, truly.”

“Very good. And Mr. Daniels bought the cow. He found, however, on trial, that the tenderness of the milking process, was owing to little obstinate sores on the animal that were easily irritated, and ‘*kicking*’ was the natural remedy to which the creature resorted when put in distress. The cow very often dashed the pail over, and Mr. Daniels more than once found himself on his back, the delicious contents of the pail rapidly conveying themselves into his neck, or besprinkled with leopard-like accuracy and permanency over his robes!”

We all smiled at this poor dilemma of good Mr. Daniels.

“The cow was sold at a loss. She was neither peaceable nor good for butter. It was a regular swindle.”

"You have made out of it quite a case of trouble, as well as a very facetious story, sir."

"Oh! well, sir, he met with other trials and losses. Once it occurred that his wife and family were a long time sick, and a few people of his Parish collected thirty dollars and sent it to him for the purchase of some little conveniences, or things necessary in their condition. The money was sent in a letter. It happened that his physician came in at the very moment Mr. Daniels was reading the letter, and understanding immediately the drift of it, he told him that he was in great want of thirty dollars to pay for a horse he had just bought. And he proposed, that if Mr. Daniels would let him have thirty dollars, although his bill was forty-five, he would give him a receipt in full. What could he do? He gave it to him, and provided for his necessities out of his own funds."

"I declare, sir," said Mr. Brown, "that was a hard case, and it may seem to me the more so, inasmuch as my own physician never could be persuaded to accept from me a dollar for all his attention and services in my family."

"Just so it is here," said Esquire Peters. "Physicians don't charge their ministers anything in half the parishes of the country. And yet they have as good a claim on them for their attendance, as they have on any other persons, and ministers' families want as much waiting on as those of their parishioners."

"Certainly they do, sir. But will you now be so good as to tell me how I shall pay my debts?"

"How much do you owe?"

"Four hundred dollars."

"And your salary is—?"

"Four hundred dollars."

"Won't the people increase it?"

"They don't think it possible."

"Do they wish you to remain with them?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you *really wish* to pay your debts—enough to make some sacrifice?"

"I think I do—any sacrifice in my power."

"Well, then, I will dictate a plan of relief. You have a good horse, carriage, and fixtures. These are worth, I know, two hundred dollars. *Sell them.*"

"Ah! but, my dear sir, how—how can I—how can I get over my Parish without a horse and carriage."

"Never mind your Parish. If your Parish requires you to keep a horse to visit the families, then they must enable you to buy one. *Sell them.* There is two hundred dollars, and it costs one hundred more to keep them. Then we have *three hundred.* You have ten acres of land, and a good cow. *Sell the cow.* There is fifty dollars more."

"Why! my dear sir, the cow keeps us from starvation! My dear wife and children *could not* get along without her."

"*SELL her.* Trust Providence. If the people see you 'starving,' they will give you another. *Sell her.* Then advertise your library—your Scott's Commentary, Doddridge's Exposition, Concordance, and the best and most

valuable of your books, or a part of your land, or your feather beds, to raise the balance, and, sir, you are again a *free man*."

Mr. Brown shuddered and turned pale, and wiped his brow with his handkerchief, and sighed out a long-drawn breath from a soul that was groaning and weeping within.

"Never mind," said the lawyer. "You have got the property to pay with. You bought these goods on credit, now part with them, and my word for it, your people will, within three weeks give them all back to you! *That's the way, sir, to raise your salary*. Put yourself in the hands of your people, and if they are not worse than a tribe of roving Arabs, they will rally around you. *Keep to your work*. Don't sit down and cry over it, and flare up into a passion, and ask a dismissal. No, no. Let it be known that you are an honest, single-minded, hard-working, God-trusting *minister*—not a mere SALARIED AGENT, but a man! a man of work, of toil, of faith, of patience, to reprove of sin, righteousness and judgment to come. Then you and your family will immediately enjoy the active sympathy and relief of your Parish."

Mr. Brown walked backwards and forwards in the lawyer's office.

"There is more than one way to get along," continued Esquire Peters. "If your people can't or won't raise your salary, they can and they will help you out of such a state as I have now placed you in. They wish to see you—then let them give you a horse. They want good sermons—

then let them buy you commentaries. They want your family should have enough bread and milk to be at least a credit to them—then let them buy you a cow.”

“You have said some true things, Esquire Peters. I thank you. Now if I had the *nerve* to meet this.”

“*Nerve*, why, my dear sir, it don’t require half the nerve that it does to bear a daily burden of debt such as you carry from year to year.”

“I’ll try it, sir—I *will try it*,” said Mr. Brown. “If I fail—”

“You won’t fail. If you do, I’ll make you a present of the best horse there is in Hills county.”

“And the offer to go and settle at Montrose, on a salary of five hundred dollars?”

“Instantly decline. You lose all your old friends if you accept it. You can’t make any as reliable ones in their place for two, three, or five years. You must be at a good deal of expense and trouble to remove. You are much attached to the people where you now are, and know their circumstances and necessities. You enjoy a pleasant connection with your brother ministers about here. You are in the neighborhood of the very best of schools for your children. You are wanted here. Your work is here. Why go from all this to a new and a strange people, with no greater cause for removal than you have mentioned, and with so little prospect of any better field of labor, or improvement in your pecuniary concerns?”

"I think, sir, you have done me good by your advice. I do really thank you, and will endeavor that it shall not be lost. There is this one thing that I would speak of before I leave the subject. I have thought that a society would sometimes be led to raise their minister's salary, *rather than lose him*. If I have a call to Montrose, and am offered five hundred dollars, will not my people advance a hundred also, if they find me disposed to accept it."

"No, that is, if they have the right spirit, they will not. If my minister wants to go away *merely for money*, I let him go. If he plays a game of chance with me of this nature, *pretending that he will go*, in order to draw out more salary, I let him play the game out. Many a minister has lost a good place in this same manner. No, sir; throw yourself on your people. If health, and duty, and providence do imperatively call you away, then go away. But don't *create* a case and then go. No, no, obey the calls of providence. *Debts are nothing!* fiddle-sticks, I've been collecting debts all my days, and now I tell you, sir, never leave a good Parish on their account. They are easily disposed of, and *never so easily as among one's long tried friends!* I have known some ministers who changed places three or four times to pay their debts and who at last died in great poverty. Others I have been acquainted with, who have mourned bitterly their 'false steps' as they termed them, of this very nature. A great eater up of a small salary is a horse, with wagon, carriage, harnesses, &c.

Now if any Parish in this ecuntry wants a minister to keep a horse and carriage, let the people pay for it!"

Mr. Brown felt immediately relieved of his depression of spirits by this conversation, and went home to "*raise his salary.*"

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SUBJECT CONCLUDED, BY AN ARGUMENT.

I TOLD Esquire Peters who shook hands cordially with Mr. Brown as he left the office, that I wished every minister in the country could have heard the conversation."

"Well, Mr. CLARK," said he, "it would do no more good than the Rev. Doctor Whiting accomplished by preaching so earnestly on Infant Baptism in his parish."

"How was that?"

"Why all the peaceable Baptists in his society immediately left it, and all the doubters, doubted still, and the believing hesitated as to the expediency of the practice. So that in ten years, besides his own, he baptised but five children."

We had a hearty laugh over this. Not, to be sure, at its representing so forcibly the parental neglect of a religious ceremony greatly endeared to us, but at the 'Doctor's' unexpected disappointment.

"After all Esquire Peters" I enquired, "do you not a little too strenuously defend parishes that give their ministers but small salaries?"

"I would not defend a parish in anything mean or unjust," said he.

"Of course not; but there are a great many parishes where the salary might be increased if the people were so disposed."

"Well, if they are indisposed, shall their pastors on this account leave them?"

"Why may not a pastor leave his people from such a cause, especially after representing to them again and again their sin and neglect?"

"Is it," he inquired, "a greater sin in them to neglect his personal accommodation, than their own duty of immediate repentance towards God? And yet shall he leave a place simply because the people, or a portion of them, continue Godless, or cold in their affections, and you must allow that this is not a question of absolute necessity but only one of additional comfort?"

I contended that it often seemed "to be something *nearer* to 'necessity' than a 'comfort' or 'convenience.'"

He thought that the point presented by him was in general the rule, and that mine was the exception to it.

"If so," I replied, "you are aware, sir, that offences against our fellow men may be measured, while those especially committed against God are infinite, admitting neither comparison nor excuse."

"True," said he. "But if the infinite One bears with the neglect of his finite worm, may not this afford us lessons of patience with one another?"

“And yet” said I, “coming back to the point, you would support well the faithful minister, you are in favor of generous salaries?”

“By all means, sir. Yes, the parish that is able to support a minister well, and will not, is guilty of a meanness and a sin that is seldom perpetrated in any other transactions in civilized life, where dollars and cents come into the account, and deserves to be severely censured. Still I would not go for the highest salaries. I think that a fat and pampered ministry is a greater calamity than a suffering one. It will degenerate, sir, and become idle, effeminate—nay vicious. There must be *suffering*. God’s hand was on BUNYAN’S prison-lock. He had something to do with ejecting two thousand ministers from their pulpits for their non-conformists sentiments, and sending the PURITAN divines to the American forests. The world needs a dependent, hard-working, self-sacrificing, God-honoring ministry not a rich, gaudy, overfed, and effeminate one.”

I agreed with Esquire Peters in these views for the most part, but assured him that I thought they offered no “excuse to a narrow-minded and neglectful people.”

“None, *none!* NONE!!” said he, emphatically. “The Saviour has said, ‘*Feed my sheep,*’ ‘*Feed my lambs,*’ and I see not why these commands may not as well define my duty to the minister, as his to me.”

I told him that I did not care to prolong the conversation. “Yet,” said I, “it does not seem to me quite candid to say so much in favor of cheap living and small salaries, drawn

from the habits of ministers who lived thirty, forty, and fifty years ago, in times of far greater simplicity of manners than now, and make them the standard for all future time."

"You may 'be right," said he quickly.

"Besides, sir," I continued, "it seems to me something like 'crocodiles tears' to weep at the remembrance of virtues and customs past, and commend them to ministers to imitate, when their compliance would be money in the pockets of these *virtuoso*s."

"Very well put!" said he, "call them *vampires*, blood-suckers."

"And further, sir," said I, "it cannot but be unjust to charge the ministry as venal and mercenary, *simply* for asking and accepting an increase of salary now that we all acknowledge the times have greatly changed from the days of our fathers, and that the expenses of common life even, are greater than formerly. You might as well make them of men in other professions, as well might you require *lawyers*, sir, yes **LAWYERS** to live as they once did, and charge no more for their services or suffer the cry, '*venality!*' '*mercenariness!*'"

"Lawyers!" said he, rising, "lawyers; why my dear sir, lawyers! lawyers! they are the hardest-working, poorest paid, coarsest-fed and clothed, and the most patient men who at the present time do service to their fellow-citizens."

Of course I could but laugh heartily at his defence of his own brother-hood.

Said he, "There is one thing that it may be well to speak of in this conversation. I allude to *poor Parsonages*! There are some dismal-looking, worm-eaten, comfortless Parsonages about the country—I know not how old they are—untenantable structures. Yet the people keep them for their Pastors! They have no other place to put them. They reckon them *so much* in the salary also. They who occupy them, often and justly murmur. They contract diseases in them. They are sometimes hurried to their graves on account of their unfitness to be the abodes of good men. The people call them *Parsonages*. Better term them," said he, "*Parsimoniousnesses*. With all my views of those matters, I can assure you I am against these ways!"

Esquire Peters and I seldom entertained any very diverse opinions on these points. We parted.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE TOUR.

ESQUIRE PETERS called the next day to talk with me further as to the minister's leaving us for a foreign tour. We found the subject one somewhat involved in difficulties. In the first place it was painful to part with him. But this was comparatively easy to dispose of, for he seemed to be in a condition that gave us the assurance of forever losing him, if we did not take some action to secure his temporary absence. The opposition of his own mind to a separation from us and from his family, must be overcome. Like many other sick men, he fancies himself better than he is, and is often in the pulpit when the Parish would prefer to have him absent. He is a man who, as long as he can, will continue to work. He had rather die at home than at Rome. So between his buoyancy and activity on the one hand, and his feebleness and apprehension on the other, there is a difficulty to be overcome. Perhaps it is not an insurmountable one.

Then there is the raising of the money. This will cost an effort and it may be we shall not find the Parish willing to

to do anything so generous as we have been led to anticipate.

But here comes Colonel Arrs. Perhaps he will give us unexpected encouragement.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the colonel, "hope you have not waited for me."

"Not at all, sir," answered the lawyer, "I sent for you to meet us here, as we are talking about the best way to provide for the pastor's leaving us on a voyage to Europe."

"Yes!"

"We suppose that, if all other hinderances are removed, that there will still remain the raising of funds. He has not money enough of his own, I conclude?"

"No, I suppose not. Money is wanted, and that rather plentifully, gentlemen, to go over Europe."

"How much will be necessary?" we inquired.

"It depends, of course, on the time consumed, and the extent of his travels. I think he will need, at least, a thousand, he will probably want fifteen hundred dollars,—that is,—if he is absent ten or twelve months."

"Well, say twelve hundred dollars," said the lawyer; "can we raise it, or eight hundred at the least, among the people?"

"Can but try, gentlemen."

"We ought to help him."

"To be sure we had."

"He has labored hard enough among us, while we all know that his services have been sought elsewhere at a

higher salary than ours, and where it may be his labors would have been less."

"May have been, and they may have been harder."

"Still, the man is a useful minister, and a good citizen, and a fine manager for himself and the society. We ought to appreciate the benefit to us of such an one."

"I think," replied the colonel, "that you can raise eight or nine hundred dollars for him."

"Well, suppose we attempt it, what is the best course to adopt?"

"I should say that it would be well to put down our own subscriptions first on paper, drawn up here, drawn up now, by you, Esquire Peters, and then each of us take a copy of it and go to work."

Esquire Peters needed no urging to do this. He sat down at my desk, and prepared the papers.

"Now," said the colonel, "time is money. Put our firm down a hundred dollars, provided," he continued, taking up one of the papers, and holding his cane ready to leave, "provided, gentlemen, *you will each of you do the same.*"

The lawyer looked at me, and I at him, and the colonel at both of us.

"Why, gentlemen," said he, "it's nothing for ye. And if it were, how in the world are you going to raise nine hundred dollars in this Parish, and from among people some of whom never saw a sick day in their life, and think a sick man is merely a hypochondriac, and a voyage to Europe is

one of pure vanity, or a senseless whim, unless you do about half of it yourselves?"

I felt the force of his remarks, but had not calculated that my *proportion* would be over twenty-five dollars, and Esquire Peters had thought he should subscribe fifty.

"Proportion! gentlemen, I have long given that up. A man must give for himself, and not for other people. They talk of doing people good by making them give. It may do sometimes, but natural meanness cleaves to a man who is selfish, and what you force from him at one time, he will get back at another. Generosity, my friends, is the best rule. Give while you can. Give, if there is a worthy object of charity; and if there's a money-saver around, who sees that because you have been generous he needn't give at all (!) let him go, he ain't worth pinching.

The squire said if it were best to put down a hundred, he would do so. And seeing him write his name for that amount, I was compelled—and did it unreluctantly—to follow suit.

"There now," said the colonel, "we have got over the main difficulty. Dr. Alexander must give a hundred, Mrs. Hartwell a hundred. The young men must raise among themselves two hundred, and we'll get the balance—I don't care if it amounts to a thousand—in such quantities as we can."

So saying, the colonel left us.

We found that relief had come indeed. True it came out of our own purses somewhat, but we knew when we under-

took the matter, that they who desire to benefit another, must themselves lift the first stone.

We went abroad through the day, and succeeded so much better than we expected, that ere the sun went down, it was evident that the whole sum of nine hundred dollars would be raised. We subscribed the money payable immediately, or at any time within six months or a year, to the order of Esquire Peters and Colonel Arrs, for the pastor.

There were some very singular objections made to signing the papers, by individuals to whom we made application.

One person, who owns a good deal of property among us, thought there was danger the pastor would meet with the cholera in Europe, and would certainly die if he went there. He declined giving anything out of benevolent feeling. In "Disputing Territory" where there is some wealth. we found one man who would have given ten dollars, if one of his neighbors had not already given three. And another who felt, he said, under no obligation to preserve the life of a minister who bought butter and eggs of one of the greatest scoundrels in the "Territory," (*meaning one with whom he had a twenty-years variance!*) One individual said that all he had to give was his prayers. But, as he generally excused himself from praying when called on in meeting, we hardly knew how to estimate their value. Another person said he valued his minister *above* gold, and shouldn't be a party to sending him away "any how." And a very

clever, simple sort of a man to whom we applied, assured us that all he could do with his "team," he should be glad to.

There were others who were themselves about to take journeys and couldn't spare anything, still others who thought the minister must by this time have laid up a thousand or two thousand dollars, and he had better spend that. And some said that ministers had about as well work on as long as they could, and when their "time came" die like other folks! But most of these objectors at last gave something, and felt quite gratified to see the work go on. I could but notice, during the progress of this subscription, how easy it is for us to raise objections to, and treat with coldness, all plans for doing good, and yet we *really* think and do far different from what we say. Most men are struggling with plans of their own, under more or less discouragement, and extra subscription papers put them out of humor at the first. Yet there are few benevolent men, who, if they can have their say out, will not, after that, come forward and do their part.

It is most gratifying to us to witness the general good feeling on the subject.

Mrs. Littleway said that her husband was always a great friend to ministers, and taught her to be, and to deny herself, and said she, "I do deny myself a great deal for them and for religion, and I wish to do so." So she subscribed twenty dollars and said if it was necessary, she should deny herself "many customary privileges to pay for it."

The Misses Breakwells gave us twenty dollars. It was the general desire that we should succeed—and we did succeed!

JOURNAL, *September 15th*.—It is just three months to-day since the death of Deacon Hartwell. He is very much regretted in the parish, especially among his most intimate friends. No one has yet been mentioned as his successor in the deaconship. I think that Marcus Street will have the appointment. I don't know among us one who is better fitted for the office.

We have raised a thousand dollars for the *Tour*. The Pastor was waited on three weeks ago to be informed of what we were doing. He at once said, "I can't go this fall. Moreover I am just setting out for the Springs to be absent a month. I have here in this purse fifty dollars from the ladies of the society, for this very object. I will think of it, I am grateful—I will go—but not I think till spring."

He has not yet returned from his journey, but writes us that he seems to have derived much benefit from his excursion.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE—ARCHIBALD—THE PARSONAGE.

THE Pastor returned from the Springs really looking like himself, and we began to hope that his health was not so seriously impaired as we had imagined. But as winter came on, and its exposure, and its labors, he began to suffer from his old complaints. Through January and February he was almost wholly confined to his house. In March the physicians with one voice told him he must entirely cease preaching for some time, or make up his mind to leave the world.

Mr. Williams met this decision with extraordinary calmness, and forthwith asked leave of absence for one year.

* * * * *

May 20th.—The society having given Mr. Williams leave of absence for one year, he has left us and is passing a few weeks with his wife at her father's, near the city of New York. We learn that he continues feeble, although he is not confined to the house, and indulges the hope that his contemplated voyage to Europe, towards the expenses of which the Parish, by great exertions, have made arrangements to pay, at least one thousand dollars, will completely restore him. For this we all most earnestly pray. Bitter has been this parting with our beloved minister and his wife. We hardly dare expect that he will again return.

In the meantime the Rev. Mr. Ketchall, recently dismissed from Ham, is preaching to us a few Sabbaths. Some of our people are "taken" with him, but the greater part do not seem much pleased. He will probably leave in two or three weeks, and he has it in contemplation to attempt the building up of a new church and congregation in the city of New York!

* * * * *

The cars now run through the Hollow. The line is extended above us and will go on, it is said, to Canada! Already the two villages begin to approach each other, as dwellings and shops continue to be erected. It is wonderful to notice the change in *that* place. They have already more than a thousand inhabitants, and others are flocking in every day. Business there of every kind is thriving, and if the business and activity are a fair index of the wealth, I think the people must be in very flattering circumstances.

Our society has suffered a good deal from the establishment of churches, and the new order of things in the Hollow. We have lost more than fifty members, and a good many of our young people have removed there. We are decreasing while they are increasing. Still we enjoy some privileges they do not, and trust that this vine of the Lord's planting will not be suffered to languish and die.

Colonel Arrs remains as yet steadfastly our friend. I hope that he may, by-and-by, come forward and unite with the church. He is not very well at all times. Henry Arrs

is doing business at the Hollow. And Marcus Street & Son are again going forward with their "works."

Jones & Wilcox, I am sorry to say, have been burned out and have failed for a large amount. It is hinted that Peter Wilcox and one of his rowdy companions set fire to the buildings with their own hands, out of revenge for being sent away from the shop in disgrace.

John Smith is no more! He expired suddenly at his work in March last, and was buried in our cemetery in the rear of the church.

Mr. Park, our Sexton, still rings, and tolls our Parish bell. My son Robert is a WALL street man now, and he has already a "Dock" contract with "Government" amounting to four hundred thousand dollars! He supplies lumber for bridges, railroads, and vessels, an immense amount! He still speaks of *millions!*"

ARCHIBALD is yet unmarried.

* * * * *

June 10th.—The "BEST OF MINISTERS" left the port of New York for Liverpool on the second day of this month. May a kind providence waft him safely over the waters, and return him to us again in due time, refreshed in body and mind, endued with new energy for his master's work.

The PARSONAGE is without an occupant!

THE END.











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